Week ending April 7 1951 Every Thursday Fourpence

John Bull

V.I.P. SQUADRON

Inside story of Churchill's secret war flights

J. B. PRIESTLEY'S GREAT SERIAL

"Festival at Farbridge"

The pick of the Bonny Bournville Parade

These four healthy youngsters have been chosen from the weekly winners of our Bonny Bournville Children Parade—a nationwide competition which brought us thousands of photographs of Britain's little cocoa-drinkers. Growing up sturdy and strong, they all enjoy a regular cup of Bournville Cocoa, and love its chocolatey flavour in cakes, puddings and sweets.

Janet Hartley, Brixton Hill, London. Aged 4, daddy's favourite photographic model. Loves dressing up, telling baby brother the bedtime stories mother told her.

Patrick Tacey, Leicester. 2 years old. Favourite outfit—dungarees. Happiest when repairing model car with spanner and screwdriver. Wants to be an engineer like Daddy.

Roger Parry, Halifax. 3 years old. Wants to be an engine driver ; happiest when father takes him to Halifax Station to watch the trains.

Alan Charles, Aberdeen. Aged 5, already a keen sportsman. Plays snooker, bagatelle and golf: has his own clubs and goes round with father.

And here's a new Cadbury Recipe your *youngsters will enjoy*

FRUIT CHOCOLATE CREAM

apple pulp or other fruit · 1 level tablesp. Bournville Cocoa · 2 level tablesps. sugar or more to taste · 1 heaped tablesp. flour · ¼ pint milk

Put the fruit in the bottom of a glass dish or individual glasses. Mix sugar, cocoa and flour to a smooth paste with a little of the milk. Put the remainder on to boil and when boiling pour on to the blended cocoa and flour, stirring well. Return to the saucepan, bring to the boil and cook about 8 minutes stirring continuously. Pour over the fruit and when cold top with mock cream. It is advisable to make the chocolate cream in a double pan or in a basin standing in a pan of boiling water

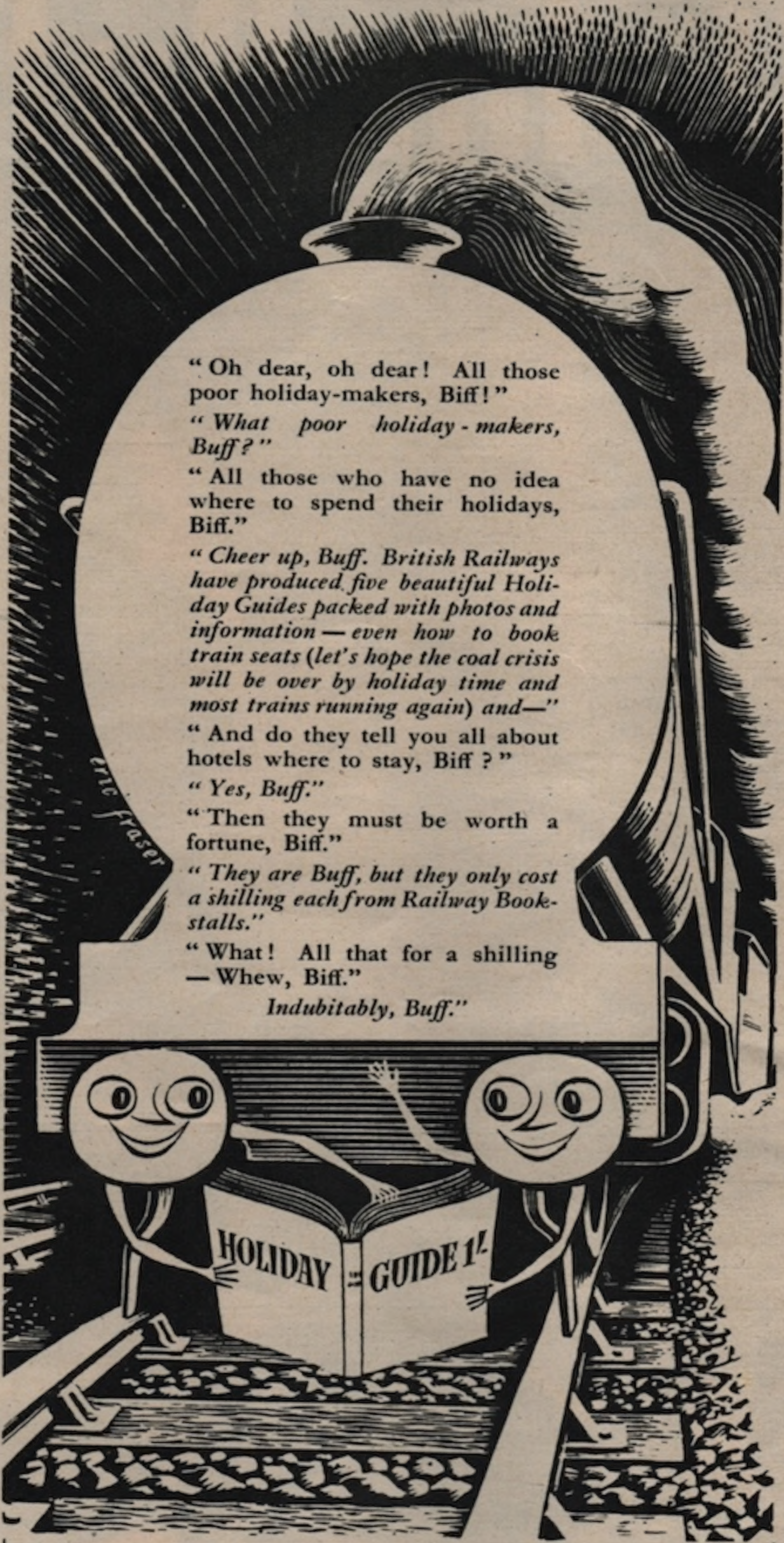
MOCK CREAM | *2 oz. margarine · 1 tablesp. warm water · 2 level tablesps. dried milk powder · 2 oz. fine sugar · vanilla ess.*

Cream margarine and sugar. Add milk powder and water alternately. Beat well and add flavouring.

CADBURYS

BOURNVILLE COCOA

GROWING FAMILIES HAVE THE COCOA HABIT



"Oh dear, oh dear! All those poor holiday-makers, Biff!"

"*What poor holiday-makers, Buff?*"

"All those who have no idea where to spend their holidays, Biff."

"*Cheer up, Buff. British Railways have produced five beautiful Holiday Guides packed with photos and information — even how to book train seats (let's hope the coal crisis will be over by holiday time and most trains running again) and—*"

"And do they tell you all about hotels where to stay, Biff ?"

"*Yes, Buff.*"

"Then they must be worth a fortune, Biff."

"*They are Buff, but they only cost a shilling each from Railway Bookstalls.*"

"What! All that for a shilling — Whew, Biff."

Indubitably, Buff."

It's quicker and easier by Rail

Although British Railways are required to save coal in the National Emergency by withdrawing trains, they hope to be able to restore most, if not all, services by the time holidays are here again.

Whether your journey is to be a "short hop" to the sea or a long run to "strange parts," you will get there quicker and easier by rail. If you're undecided where to go, dip into one of these holiday guides. There's one for each area — each a 300-page preview of your chosen holiday-land.

HOLIDAY GUIDE
HOLIDAY GUIDE
HOLIDAY GUIDE
HOLIDAY GUIDE

BRITISH RAILWAYS

EDITORIAL

Give everyone in the Army a real job to do

REARMAMENT GOES AHEAD, and part of the bill for guns and machines will be presented in the Budget in a few days' time.

But what of the bill for the spending of human life—not on the battlefield but on the parade ground and in the training camps?

On that subject the nation needs far more information and far more reassurance. Is the Army really making the best and fullest use of the men it takes from civilian life?

When the Z-men's call-up was announced, it was at once challenged on the ground that in fifteen days not enough training could be accomplished to make the operation worthwhile either to the Army or to the men themselves.

Reservists have since been assured that their time will be used to the full, not wasted on formalities or square-bashing. It is to be hoped that these assurances will be borne out in practice.

Even so, there is still scope for disquiet about the service conditions in Regular Army, National Service and officers' training establishments. There are too many complaints of men kept "kicking their heels" for want of useful employment, and too many stories of leave being granted just to get rid of men for whom no work can be found.

The High Command should answer these doubts and clear the air by telling the public, through the Services Ministers in Parliament, and through the Press, a lot more about what it is doing with its additional manpower.

Then, if any waste is shown up, measures can be taken to end it.

For Britain's greatest problem today is the perpetual effort to get a quart of manpower out of a pint pot of population. The more the Army succeeds in recruiting the men it wants, the greater that problem becomes.

ALL the praiseworthy efforts being made to render Regular service more attractive do not alter this fact: that the man who doffs his factory overalls to put on battledress must continue to be fully and worthily employed in the service of the community. If he is not, it is simply a waste of manpower which cannot be tolerated today.

At last the nation is coming to accept Regular service as an honourable and necessary profession in peacetime. The day when the Army's "other ranks" were regarded as a refuge for ne'er-do-wells has almost completely gone.

Now that respected, better paid and longer careers are offered by the Services more recruits will be drawn in and so permanently taken off the manpower strength of industry.

This is necessary. The nation recognizes it and will foot the human bill without discontent—so long as it knows that the Army will bring the maximum of efficiency and imagination to its use of men.

Therefore, a new conception of all the Fighting Services is needed. Hitherto they have tended to be inviolate sanctuaries where their own professional experts reigned supreme, almost uncriticized, except when a battle was lost in time of war.

Today, instead, the Army especially should be regarded more in the light of another industry—the Defence Industry—subject to criticism and gingering up whenever and wherever these are needed.

THE minute a civilian industry is found wanting, whether it belongs to the State or to private enterprise, an outcry is quickly raised. Waste of manpower, inefficiency, out-of-dateness are unmasked in Parliament and in the Press. The urgent quest for higher production and productivity throws a searching spotlight even on cobwebby corners of industry which have lain undisturbed for many years.

Everyone has perforce been made "efficiency conscious," and the continual call for national effort and sacrifice makes everyone, too, more critical of other people's shortcomings.

This is an attitude of mind which must now be applied to the Fighting Services and especially to the Army, which still somehow retains a tradition—in spite of two world wars—of being the Service most opposed to innovations.

"They're always getting ready to fight the last war but one" is a familiar if partly unfair jibe. There must be no more justification for such jibes in the future—in particular against those high officers who are responsible for making the utmost planned and economical use of their men's time.

Today, the Army is no longer a caste or community apart. Total war and partial peace have ended its isolation. It is and must be a living, integral part of the nation, sharing the nation's manpower and keeping its share "fully employed" in the best sense of the words.

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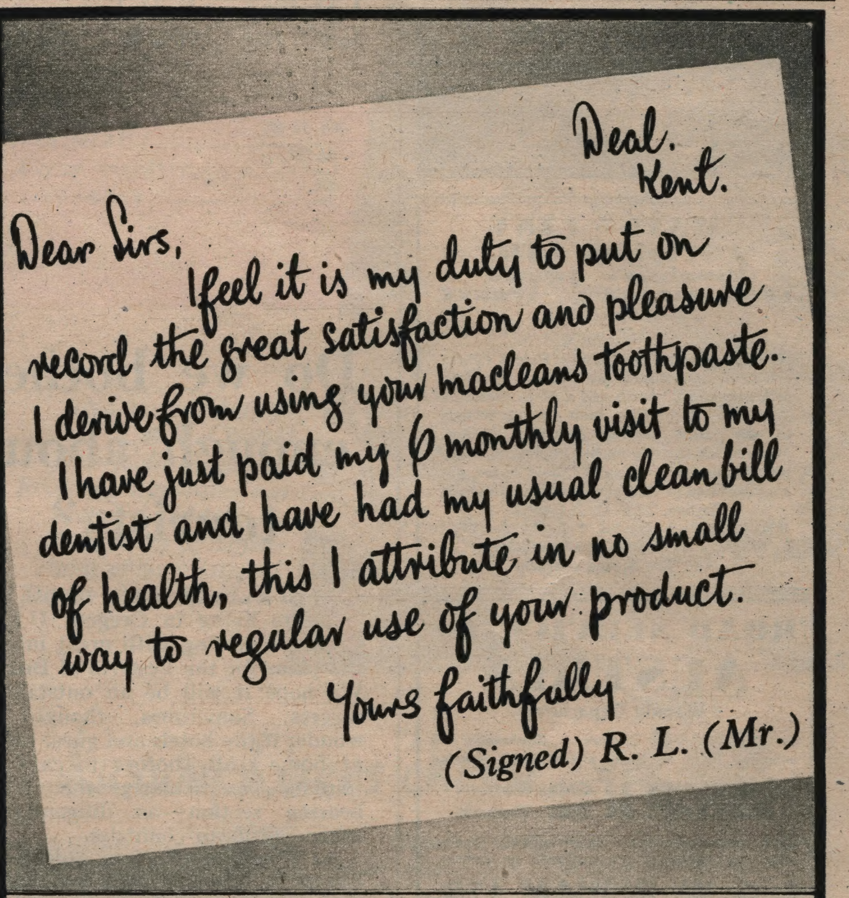
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April 7, 1951 VOL. 89 No. 2336 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

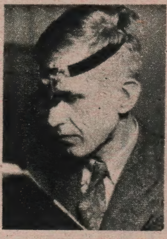
FREE SPEECH

Do we bother enough about tourists?

BOTH MY WIFE AND I, British subjects living in Oregon, U.S.A., are following with great interest the plans for the Festival of Britain. We hope it will be an outstanding success. Sometimes, though, we wonder if the hotels and guest houses at home really bother to cater for tourists — particularly the dollar-bearing section—as diligently as other European countries.

An American friend of ours toured Europe last summer, and now declares that if he returned he would not spend any money visiting England. He liked the people and scenery well enough, but found the service far below Swiss, French and Italian standards. In London he stayed in one of the best hotels. When he asked the maid about getting his limited clothing laundered, she replied that unless he was stopping for a fortnight she could do nothing. In Switzerland, his hotel offered a twenty-four hour laundry service. He quotes many similar instances—small things, perhaps, but to Americans there is a world of meaning in the word "service." We hate to hear people report on Britain in this manner.—JOHN N. ROGERS, 635 S.E. Fairfield Lane, Beaverton, Oregon, U.S.A.

The Blind Man Reads


Arthur H. von Loesch

SOME PEOPLE with only a sixtieth part of normal sight can see to read and sew with the help of "high plus" glasses. With powerful binoculars I, a registered blind person, can halt a bus at a request stop, and I can read for hours with glasses which magnify a great deal. Of course, these aids can help only a small minority of those who have lost most of their sight, but I have found that doctors are willing to prescribe these appliances if patients can make use of them.—ARTHUR H. VON LOESCH, 45 Prince of Wales Crescent, London, N.W.1.

Phoning For The Doctor

I SYMPATHIZE WITH THE doctor's secretary who complained that, when people telephone for the doctor, they fail to give him a proper description of the symptoms ("Free Speech," March 17). My experience, however, is that doctors generally resent being told in plain terms what an illness is likely to be. When my husband was taken ill, I took a note to the doctor's house, in which I accurately described the symptoms. But I was very careful not to mention the word "appendicitis" (as, indeed, it turned out to be) in case the doctor considered I was panicking unnecessarily and delayed his visit. —MRS. S. T., Gateshead.

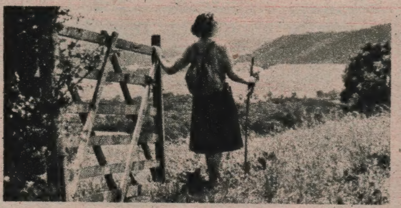
. . . Having been a district nurse and midwife, I can say that doctors prefer to be given a simple description of an ailment. If poor old Mrs. Smith has been "took queer," that is the only thing she knows, and it is the doctor's job to decide what is wrong. Incorrectly used, medical terms can create a very wrong impression.—MRS. H. M. SOLLY, 114 Brockey Rise, London, S.E.23.

Wives Who Work

WIVES AND MOTHERS are often criticized for taking jobs. They are blamed for not making comfortable homes for their husbands or for lack of parental control. As a working wife, I would like nothing better than to stay at home housekeeping, but in four years of marriage I have not had the chance. Of course, most of us are too proud to admit that we work solely for the money.—MRS. L. M., Liverpool.

Photograph That Shocked

I SHUDDERED at the photograph [*see below*] of the girl admiring the view in Henry Firth's excellent article on Youth Hostels (JOHN BULL, March 10). Surely she did not contemplate walking through such fine grass — she had already, quite unnecessarily, opened a gate and walked into a field where there was no sign of a footpath. And I hope the flowers she held were not picked from the countryside. Flowers should be left for others to admire.—D. ACFORD, 29 Baxter Square, Derby.



. . . The greatest drawback to hostels during the summer months is school journey parties. Last July in the Lake District, hostellers were at their wits' end because two parties of schoolchildren were travelling around and using the most popular hostels. School parties should be accommodated in village or church halls, leaving the hostels for the genuine hosteller.—G. F., Jarrow-on-Tyne.

School journey parties, groups of children between nine and sixteen, are admitted to hostels, provided the leader in charge of them is a member of the Youth Hostels Association. They have to book through the Y.H.A. regional secretary, who usually sees to it that they do not take up too great a proportion of available accommodation.

A Home Of Their Own

CAN A YOUNG COUPLE get married today on less than £500? Judging by some readers' views in "Free Speech," the answer seems "No." Yet my fiancée and I are setting up home on less than £150. After finding that we would have to pay at least £2 a week for a flat or rooms, we decided to *save* £2 a week, and in a year saved £100. At the same time we went into town each week and spent 10s. on household requirements and asked friends to give us "things for the house" at Christmas time and for birthdays. A few weeks ago we went the rounds of second-hand shops and have furnished a living-room on £15. Next for the house itself. With £100 capital, getting one has not been easy. Yet we have done it. It's only a cottage—two up, two down, and no water-heating system—but it's a place of our own. Neither my future wife nor myself earns big wages; our combined spending money is less than £3 5s. a week.—LANCASHIRE LAD, Bolton.

"Festival At Farbridge"

PRIESTLEY, who has always written to find the public heart, is, I believe, doing as much for Britain with his novel, *Festival at Farbridge*, which JOHN BULL is serializing, as any other feature of Festival year can do. *Festival at Farbridge* is a guide book to the British way of looking at things—and how witty a guide the author is!—WYNDHAM THOMAS, 39 Leyshon Gardens, Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, Glam.

. . . In a few paragraphs, Priestley's characters come vigorously to life. We feel we know them as well as our own townsfolk.—J. E. BROWN, 202 Lambeth Road, London, S.E.1.

. . . Priestley seems to bear a grudge against his characters (or are we meant to *hate* them?). There is the Group Captain's jargon, the girl with "eyes like gooseberries," the "wheezy old bucks," and the poor cook, "dumpy and middle-aged," who "waddled" when she walked. — NORAH HOUGHAM, 8 The Verne, Portland, Dorset.

. . . *Festival at Farbridge* would make a first-rate, all-British film. I visualize Susan Shaw as Laura Casey, John McCallum as Theodore Jenks, James Robertson Justice as Commodore Tribe, Alistair Sim as the old baronet and Jimmy Edwards as the Group Captain.—V. J. HANSON, 3 Holcombe Green, Upper Weston, Bath.

Backwards Boy

MY SON, aged five-and-a-half, still writes figures and letters backwards. I am assured he is not the only one. When he first started school, I would write the figures 1 to 10 and ask him to copy them. The result was this:

1ƧƐᔭƧႱΓ8ɘ10

He has improved since, but still writes 7 and 9 backwards.—MOTHER, Lincs.

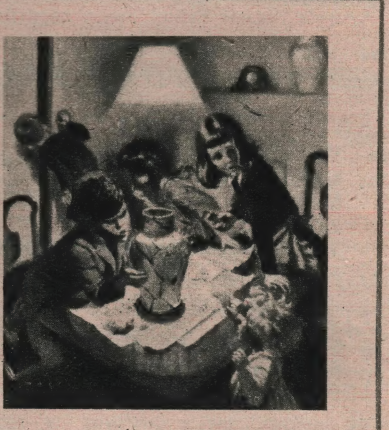
Rescuing Animals

DO WE, AS A NATION, carry our love of animals to extremes? Recently I saw two brave schoolgirls rescue a dog which had fallen off a sea wall. They clambered along a slippery ledge and, before they succeeded, both fell into ice-cold water. Fortunately, they could swim. But there are too many fatalities in rescuing animals. — WILLIAM T. SULLIVAN, 15 Belmont Road, Westgate, Kent.

John Bull welcomes readers' views, experiences and ideas for publication. A guinea is paid for every letter used. Mark the envelope "Free Speech" and make sure your full name and address are in the letter.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

DOUGLAS L. MAYS knows just how the Cover Kids feel about that broken vase. He, too, can remember breaking a family heirloom and the feverish haste to glue the bits together before his parents came home. Mays, who was born in Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, is fifty years old. In appearance, there's no mistaking he's an artist. He hasn't shaved since 1926—as his bushy beard testifies.



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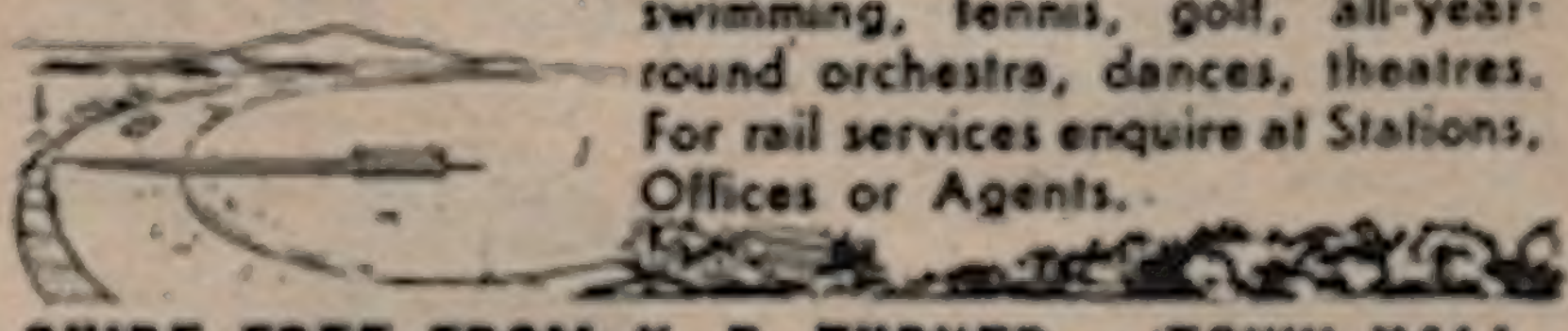

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Before a wartime flight, Churchill talks to his wife and Soviet Envoy Gousev. Beyond: the Skymaster's crew and Mary Churchill. Right: Sarah Churchill

V.I.P. SQUADRON

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

Their passenger lists of Very Important Personages have included the King, Churchill and Attlee. . . . Starting the story of the men who fly the famous

"John" Collins, former chief of 24 Squadron. Once, a Prime Minister piloted his plane

CIRCLING THE NATIONAL AIRPORT at Washington, the four-engined R.A.F. transport glided past the 550-foot Washington monument and dropped gently to the runways along the Potomac River. The aircraft taxied up to where a guard of honour stood. The band played and Clement Attlee stepped out. The ceremonies were brief, and the Prime Minister disappeared into a long, black car.

As the guard marched off, the plane's captain, a thirty-five year old wing commander named Ernest George Fraser and known as "Bill," climbed out, stretched his legs and started to walk towards the porticoed terminal. He had just flown twenty hours non-stop from London.

Behind the handsome administration buildings at the north end of the field, Fraser saw the sign of the American Air Transport Command swinging above an open shed. He paused, and then walked briskly towards the deserted hangar. Inside it stood a lone aircraft, a Douglas DC4 transport, sometimes known as the C54 or Skymaster. Painted on its wings was the registration—EW999.

Fraser is a calm and sturdy individual who seldom lets anything excite him. He stood silently, his eyes wandering over the familiar outline of the plane. Then he turned and strode away. It was the autumn of 1945 and Attlee was making his first visit to President Truman. Fraser had piloted the Prime Minister in another Skymaster, and now he had looked for the last time at EW999, the finest and most luxuriously appointed aircraft ever to fly — Winston Churchill's personal aeroplane, which Fraser remembered flying to conferences in Athens, Yalta, Moscow and Berlin.

The Attlee Skymaster had been transferred hastily from routine work with an R.A.F. transport squadron. It was the same type as Churchill's EW999, but all the gadgets and the trimmings on the latter made the two sister planes as different as the two Prime Ministers they flew.

EW999 was unquestionably the most beautifully fitted aircraft ever produced. It belonged to one of the most unusual formations of the Royal Air Force, Number 24 Squadron, whose function is to carry kings, cabinet ministers, admirals, generals and air marshals around the world in war and in peace.

In war, 24 Squadron flew without weapons and often without wireless and normal navigation aids. The squadron carried the King to his troops in North Africa and Italy. It took Churchill to the conferences at Cairo, Tehran, Moscow, Yalta and Potsdam. When Malta was under siege, 24 Squadron aircraft, unarmed and unarmoured, flew a regular service into the beleaguered island. In peace, the squadron carries on its traditional rôle as bearer of V.I.P.s (Very Important Personages) on the world's business. It also tries and tests navigation and landing devices, and it trains Service pilots from all over the Commonwealth.

With the exception of an air marshal who was flown into a fence, and an Air Minister who made a forced landing in a football field, 24 Squadron's history is virtually unblemished. It maintains a safety record that cannot be

George Fraser at home. He was captain of EW999, Churchill's lavishly equipped Skymaster equalled by any civil airline, and that record was kept up under wartime conditions with aircraft, some the most modern obtainable and others which were just plain obsolete.

The sight of EW999 standing deserted in the Washington hangar took Fraser back to a day in 1944 when his then Commanding Officer, Wing Commander H. B. Collins, walked into the headquarters of 24 Squadron's long range flight at Northolt, on the outskirts of London. Collins had just been with Churchill, who was at that time the proud possessor of the first prototype York transport plane.

"The Old Man," Collins said, "wants to fly to Washington non-stop. I told him the York didn't have the range and what he should have was a Skymaster. Somebody said they would talk to General Marshall about it."

General George C. Marshall was visiting Britain as the United States Army Chief of Staff. Someone apparently did speak to the general about Churchill's need for a Skymaster, and the general had a word, in turn, with the late President Roosevelt. Some weeks later, without any warning, an empty, unfurnished, four-engined Douglas Skymaster arrived out of the blue at Northolt. The pilot said it was for the personal use of Mr. Churchill.

"Some of the people responsible for the supply of aircraft," says Collins, "didn't think this was the way to get a new plane. I believe the transaction was regularized on the books of Lend-Lease, but we always thought of 999 as a personal gift from Roosevelt to the P.M."

First Trip On Christmas Day

Collins lost no time in advising the Prime Minister of the Skymaster's arrival. The wing commander was summoned to Downing Street on a Wednesday and in short, blunt Churchillian phrases told to have plans made for decorating the aircraft—and to have the designs ready by Monday. "That's the way the Old Man liked to talk," says one 24 Squadron veteran. "He always wanted things done immediately. When the Skymaster arrived it was still summer. It was December—Christmas Day—before the P.M. made his first trip in the new plane."

By December, £10,000 had been spent on the interior decorations of the plane; Fraser had completed a thirty-day course in two weeks at Miami on Skymaster flying, and the crew had made a trial run across the Atlantic and back.

Fraser, who had been nominated captain of the Skymaster, received two messages from Churchill that Christmas. The first said: "Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you and all the crew." The second was: "Stand by for Athens." The crew stood by on Christmas Eve, and took off on Christmas morning with the Prime Minister on board. "As we approached Athens," Fraser recalls, "we could see explosions within a mile or two of the airfield. However, we were given clearance to land."

As the plane engines fell silent, the sound of machine gun and small arms fire became brisk. The Greek Resistance movement, after helping to expel the Germans, was now entering into hostilities with the Royalists and the British. The issue, originally whether the king should be restored, eventually developed into civil war.

An armoured car lumbered out on to the airfield to greet Churchill, but the Prime Minister and his party did not appear. Instead, they conferred for two hours with the Regent, Archbishop Damaskinos, and local representatives around the eleven-foot walnut conference table inside the Skymaster. "Then the P.M. left us," says one of the crew. "He clambered on board one of the armoured cars and headed for the centre of Athens. Later we heard he made the trip in the front seat, with a big pistol in his hand, shouting: 'Where are those E.L.A.S.?' "

The crew stayed at the airport, listening to sporadic bursts of machine gun bullets and rumours that Churchill had been shot at as he entered the British headquarters in Athens. Flight Sergeant Jock Duncan, the sturdily-built Edinburgh-born chief steward, elected to sleep aboard the aeroplane. "There was some shooting," Duncan declares, "but the only thing that interfered with my sleep was an armoured car crew who woke me up to ask if I felt safe."

Next morning, Duncan was the most surprised man of all when the crew discovered a bullet hole in their shiny, brand new aircraft. A random shot had passed harmlessly through part of the undercarriage. "We decided not to say anything about it," Fraser recalls, "for fear the Prime Minister's advisers would tell him not to fly home. We knew he would be angry if anyone persuaded him not to fly."

One Up For The Navy

Fraser's decision not to tell the Prime Minister there was a bullet hole may also have been influenced by the fact that there was some inter-Service rivalry for the privilege of ferrying Winston Churchill; on one occasion, at least, the Navy had relieved 24 Squadron of its most famous passenger.

That was while he was en route to the Cairo Conference in 1943. Weather conditions had prevented the R.A.F. from keeping an appointment with Churchill at Gibraltar. By the time the airmen caught up with him at Malta, the Prime Minister had been won over to the delights of Mediterranean sea travel. The unofficial and unwritten history of 24 Squadron contains a colourful description of what Churchill told his private pilot on that occasion to do with one York aircraft. He concluded by barking: "I'm going with the Navy."

The York did not meet the fate the Prime Minister had assigned to it. Actually, it survived the war and was only discarded a couple of years ago, when it developed a condition that frequently marks the end of their careers for both beautiful women and aircraft: the York, at the end of its long service, had wrinkled skin. Long before that, the York was restored to Churchill's favour.

Winston Churchill has flown more miles with 24 Squadron than any other Very Important Personage. His first recorded flight with the squadron was, it is believed, in 1928, when he and Lord Londonderry presented themselves for instruction in flying. Churchill, the story goes, failed to qualify. Lord Londonderry was successful and became one of the band of *élite* pilots who have flown under 24 Squadron's banner—a black cock. This band included the King and the Duke of Windsor, who learned to fly with 24 Squadron during the twenties.

These flights were made in regular Service aircraft, and it was not until wartime that specially fitted V.I.P. aeroplanes were added to 24 Squadron. The first of these was a Flamingo which had been fitted out for the King, and was placed at the squadron's disposal at the outbreak of war. It was this aircraft that took Churchill on several exciting missions before he adopted a personal plane of his own.

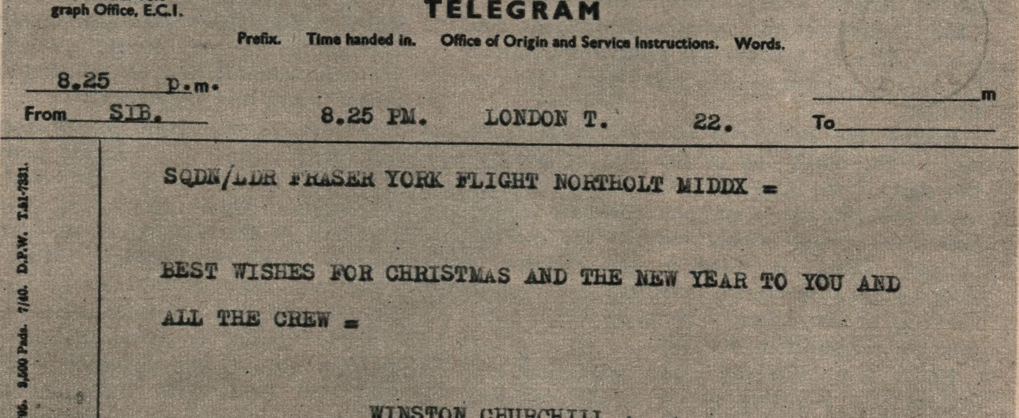
The first Churchill flight in wartime was made in the Flamingo on May 16, 1940, when the Prime Minister rushed to Paris for a conference with French leaders. Twelve Hurricanes escorted the V.I.P. plane there and back. The French Premier, Paul Reynaud, agreed to meet Churchill again on June 11 when the British Government was making a desperate effort to forestall the collapse of French resistance. By now the French cabinet was at Orleans, German planes were roaming the Channel, and the Flamingo with its escort had to make a wide sweep out to sea. The plane landed at Gien, thirty-five miles south of Orleans.

"Reynaud was alternatively depressed and excitable," the Flamingo's pilot recalls. "The P.M. was calmness itself. He would hold his cane in one hand and a cigar in the other and use one or both to emphasize his remarks." The pilot was H. B. "John" Collins, who had just won the D.F.C. for flying ammunition to the B.E.F., and who was later to command 24 Squadron. The next morning he had to report to Churchill that the weather was clouding up and that it would be impossible to meet the Hurricanes for the return flight. It was decided to head for England without escort.

Sighted German Aircraft

The Flamingo had just passed over the burning docks at Le Havre and was heading across the Channel when Churchill noticed the crew in consultation. The aircraft shot into a dive and did not level out until it was only a hundred feet above water. The Prime Minister was curious, and later asked what was the reason for the sudden descent. Collins explained that the crew had sighted two German aircraft attacking fishing boats. The Flamingo was unarmed and unescorted, so it was decided to fly at wave-top level, where planes are almost invisible. The Germans were so intent on blasting the fishermen that they let the British Prime Minister fly past unnoticed.

Churchill was back at Hendon on June 13 with Lord Halifax and Lord Beaverbrook. This time Collins landed them at Tours aerodrome on the Bordeaux road. The situation was deteriorating rapidly. When the Prime Minister



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Churchill's Christmas greeting to the crew of his new luxury Skymaster. Then came a second telegram: "Stand by for Athens"—and Christmas Day 1944 had to be celebrated in the air

In wartime, Jock Duncan was chief steward in Churchill's Skymaster. He is now chief commissary of a civil airline

Attlee shakes hands with the crew before flying to the Potsdam Conference. This was the first time that V.I.P. Squadron flew him as Prime Minister

landed there was no one waiting to meet him.

"The Old Man was really angry," Collins remembers. "He was champing at the bit and insisted on action. An old car, driven by a French officer, came down the road. The P.M. planted himself in front of it, waving at the driver with his stick. You can say what you like about Churchill's French, but on that occasion it served to convince the officer that he should drive the party into town. It was a small car and off they went, the Prime Minister and his colleagues sitting on each other's knees."

The mission failed. Collins flew Churchill back to Britain, and it was almost another three years before the Prime Minister again called on the services of 24 Squadron for an overseas flight. By this time, the spring of 1943, the squadron had received the first prototype York aircraft, LV633. It was furnished as a flying conference room and headquarters for Churchill.

The York was fitted with every refinement, down to large pedestal-type ash trays loaded with water for the Churchill cigar ash. The main cabin, decorated in shades of green, was fitted with a conference table and seven green leather upholstered chairs that both swivelled and slid. The aircraft had everything but a name. Collins christened it *Ascalon*. He got the name from a legend of St. George he found in a book belonging to his son, John. It was the story of St. George beheading the dragon with his sword Ascalon, marrying the beautiful Princess Sabra and living happily ever after with her in Coventry.

The name appealed to Churchill and it was duly inscribed on the aircraft. The story of the name was written by Fraser, then second pilot of the *Ascalon*. Fraser was the only member of the crew who could type, and it fell to him to prepare menus for the distinguished passengers. He embellished some of these with a history of the aircraft's name.

The menus became a feature of the luncheons Churchill gave on board. His first trip in the York was from Gibraltar, and to celebrate the occasion he invited twelve people to lunch before the take-off. The crew had no warning of the impending festivities and the aircraft had only one electric ring for cooking. Lunch was eventually served, but before the next flight a fully fledged cook was added to the aircrew.

Churchill's destination on this flight was North Africa and, if Collins's memory serves him right, the Prime Minister travelled there under the fanciful incognito of "Mr. Bullfinch." He was accompanied by Anthony Eden, General Sir Alan Brooke, General Sir Harold Alexander and at different stages of the journey was joined by Lieutenant-General Sir Hastings Ismay, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder and General George C. Marshall.

Collins flew from Gibraltar to Algiers escorted by six Spitfires and later by six Airacobras. From Algiers the party headed for Chateaudun du Rhumel, where, Collins recollects, "one of the pleasantest sights was the party going for a bathe in the sea without bathing suits."

Churchill Took Over The Controls

Churchill went on to Tunis and on the return flight to Algiers, at 17.20 hours in the afternoon, *Ascalon* was flying at 8,000 feet with Churchill at the controls. "I switched on George, the automatic pilot, as a precautionary measure," Collins says. "I soon found out that the Old Man knew all about George. He just said, 'Turn it off. I want to fly the aircraft.'"

What happened then is told in Collins's diary, written at the time: "The aircraft starts a turn. The P.M. doesn't notice this until we are returning the way we came. This starts the escort worrying. We put the plane back on course and steady her. The Old Man takes over and she remains steady for height and speed but starts wandering off to starboard. The Old Man realizes this and says, 'I can manage the wheel but you manipulate the rudder.'

"The aircraft settles down and so does the escort. The P.M. is pleased with this and lets go the wheel to pat me on the leg and asks, 'How am I doing?' and I say 'Very well, sir.' The aircraft starts gently into a dive. This gives the Old Man an idea. He says, 'I think we'll climb a thousand feet.' So he pulls the wheel back and the aircraft goes into a steep climb. The passengers (his generals and air marshals) aren't expecting this—they slide and lean over and wonder what is happening. The escort, thinking the same thing, follows us up. We gained the thousand feet and I looked into the cabin and saw Air Chief Marshal Tedder with rather a worried look on his face.

"The P.M. says, 'I think we'll go down a thousand feet, but slowly.' With this he pushed the wheel forward and we went down in a surprisingly short space of time. I looked around and saw the escort come down with us in a dive that must have reminded them of going down to beat up a ground target. The manoeuvres caught the passengers by surprise. The Old Man was well content and having put her level, he handed over and went aft very pleased and with a reassuring smile for the passengers."

The *Ascalon* landed at Algiers and two days later started off for Britain. Churchill was in such a good mood that before embarking he marshalled his aides and shooed them on board, crying "All aboard for Alabama!" Whether this was a sign of exuberance or was calculated to mislead onlookers as to the plane's destination is not clear. It is a fact that, on take-off, the *Ascalon* frequently headed in any direction but the one it intended to take.

The plane landed at Gibraltar and was made ready for take-off the same night. Churchill's presence in North Africa was known to the Germans. The Luftwaffe was waiting to ambush the Prime Minister on his homeward course across the Bay of Biscay. Marauding German planes hacked away at every aircraft they sighted over the Bay. R.A.F. losses were heavy

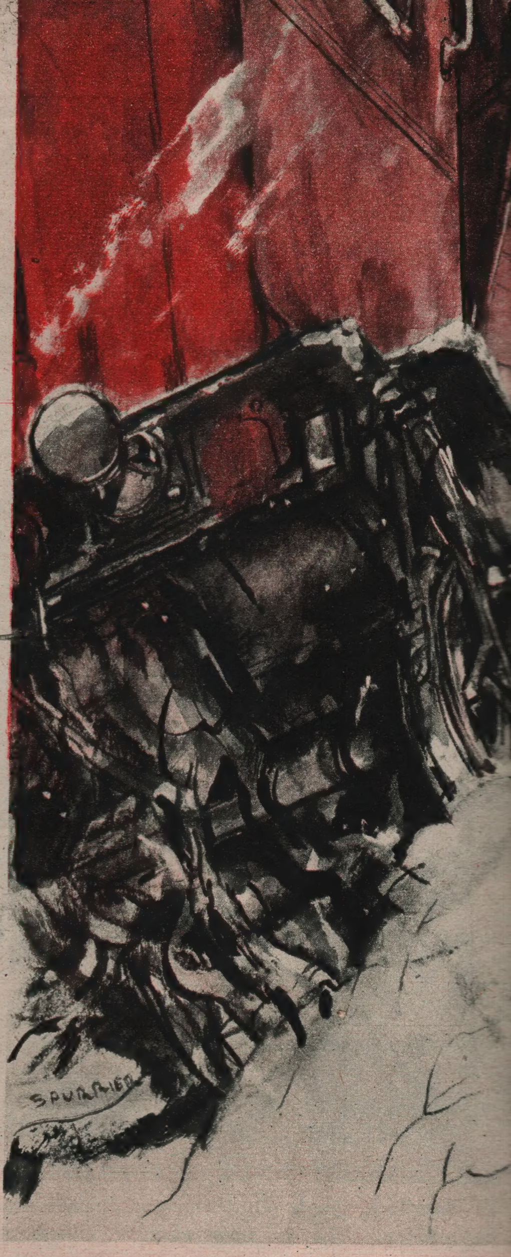
Continued on page 38

The saint and the kitten

by GEORGE BEARDMORE

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER, A.R.A.

My aunt was a saint—but I loathed her all the same. It took a train crash, a little girl and a kitten to put me right



I saw her poised with the child in her arms

MY MOTHER'S ELDEST SISTER was the nearest thing to a saint I expect to see on earth. She was very tall and thin and her skin was coffee-coloured from long years of relief work in the province of Hu-peh. She wore a coffee-coloured uniform, too, with a brown coif, and preferred me to call her Nurse Ffoulkes rather than Aunt Ursula.

This admirable woman I disliked intensely, and I learned without pleasure, when about sixteen, that she was going to spend a part of her leave keeping house for my father and me while my mother was in hospital. It was the sort of call she would always answer, although her missions usually ranged between camps for flood refugees or cholera victims, and institutions for fallen women or the infirm. Her love for large anonymous communities was one of the things I failed to understand in her. I could only love a few, a very few, individuals.

Of these the chief was my mother. She had been ailing for over a year. It was my pleasure to bring to her bedside the little food she ate, to read to her and bring her presents of flowers.

When the ambulance took her away, I cried for eight hours, on and off. Nurse Ffoulkes's arrival in the evening brought me no comfort, and when she took possession of my mother's bed I became hostile. In my adolescent fancy, I had made of the bed a mystical shrine of suffering, but to her it was, not unreasonably, merely a bed to lie on.

Worse was to follow. In my father's parish there was a gipsy girl called Clara. Nurse Ffoulkes found her shivering under a hedgerow in an advanced state of pregnancy, brought her to the house and lodged her in my mother's bed until other provision could be made for her.

Although hurt by this further violation, I was also greatly tickled, for Nurse Ffoulkes slept on the scrubbed deal of our old kitchen dresser. I was already obstinate and rude and now I laughed at her. She remonstrated with my father. He, poor ineffectual fellow, was lost without his wife, and much bewildered already by finding the gipsy sleeping upstairs.

Nurse Ffoulkes introduced to the kitchen and my mother's room such other outcasts as she came across. They numbered very many. Our small and hilly parish had a road running through it from the idle mills of Yorkshire to Liverpool. Every newcomer was a reproach to my father and an object of loathing to me.

Thus, until the night of the train accident, civil war smouldered in our little vicarage.

The accident happened on a bitter January night with a foot of snow on the ground and a gusty north wind blowing. Five people lost their lives and about thirty were either injured or badly shaken about.

I was fast asleep, for it happened about eleven at night. I roused to hear someone banging on the front door and a hoarse voice shouting: "Vicar, Vicar! There's a train tumbled itself into Rowlands's lower field!" The house woke up, doors opened, people spoke urgently. I heard Nurse Ffoulkes in the hall. Her voice was clear, incisive and unhurried. Of course, I thought, this was just the sort of emergency she was born for!

A knock sounded on my door. "Dick, I want you to get dressed quickly and come with me. A train has come off the line by Rowlands's farm. It's snowing; you must muffle up well."

She was waiting for me in the hall. A pile of blankets lay on the hall-table. "I want you to carry those," she said. I glimpsed father in dressing-gown and night-cap, flurriedly telephoning. In the kitchen doorway stood the house's other occupant, a burly tramp. To him she said: "Phelps, I want you to boil up all the water you can. Get hot-water bottles ready and make up all the beds you can find blankets for."

Phelps meekly said: "Yes, ma'am." She employed towards him the same impersonal directness she employed towards me, my father, and all the world. It was impossible to resist.

THE cold air gripped my lungs and constricted them to suffocation. It was an infantile complaint I have not mastered to this day. But I would not for worlds have complained. Nurse Ffoulkes was already burdened with a first-aid chest and an armful of coats. I followed her, at an increasing distance, down the lane, through a gate and across fields already scored by a trail of footsteps. By the first of Rowlands's outbuildings I was forced to rest, and there I dumped half my burden.

The appearance of groups of strangers turning into the farm-house began to excite me. I drew nearer, gasping in mouthfuls of my enemy, the freezing air. Nurse Ffoulkes was directing the throng while the constable at her elbow tried to catch her attention. She paused only to turn and tell him to throw open the church hall and get the boiler going. He went without a word.

"What have you done with the rest?" she asked, observing me. I did not reply because I could not. She threw me a sharp glance, took the rest of the blankets out of my arms and turned briskly down the fields. I followed. I loathed her and wanted to get back to bed, but the drama of a real train smash was irresistible.

I met a girl helping an old woman who was saying: "It's Ethel. She'll wonder whatever's happened." Then a small family, a mother dragging a wailing boy and a father angrily striding ahead with a box on his shoulder. The father said: "Clip him one, for God's sake clip him one and shut his row." Then an old man stumping behind two indifferent females, holding a silver watch in the palm of his hand and saying with satisfaction: "It's 11.17 p.m. precisely. That's when my watch stopped. It must have happened at 11.17 p.m. precisely."

They were not returning thanks for their deliverance, as one might imagine, but were filled with trivialities, or pride that they had been in an accident, or the boisterous laughter that comes of having survived sudden danger.

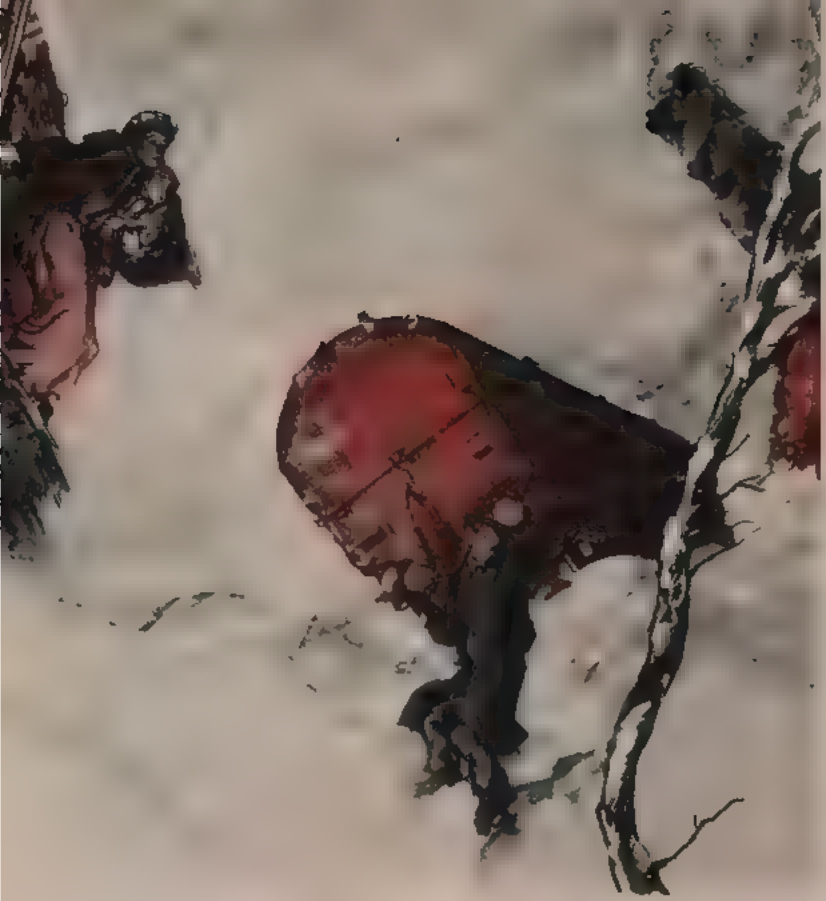
The unreality produced by my asthma was like a pane of glass between my senses and what I saw. Here was catastrophe on the grand scale, but I laughed. It was too grotesque: the railway carriage upright in a field, a second behind it on its side, another broken in two and hanging halfway down the hillside, stayed only from collapse by a larch. The engine itself lay black and steaming on its side, like a tired dog.

A youth of my own age approached and I grinned at him, but he limped by without responding, rubbing his leg. A woman sat huddled on a cabin-trunk clasping a baby in her arms, staring far in front of her. I came up to the main group of which Nurse Ffoulkes was the centre. Instinctively, all had their backs to the bitter wind which was plastering them with handfuls of snow. A man said: "I suppose somebody may still be in there."

By sleight of hand, as it seemed, Nurse Ffoulkes had the group by the ear. She overheard the remark, which referred to the smashed carriage propped against the larch. Now that I was nearer, I saw that it swayed with every gust. Possibly passengers were trapped in it, dead, alive, or unconscious. She replied: "I'm a good deal lighter than any of you. Wait here."

Not fully grasping her intention, we watched her make off across the snow. Half-heartedly I followed.

I came to a stop at the bottom of the embankment, fascinated by the imminence of disaster. The coach must inevitably soon break loose. As



The coach was groaning and swaying—any moment it would overbalance down the embankment

it rolled, it creaked and groaned. Nurse Ffoulkes was skirting it judiciously. At its outermost arc, she jumped on to the splintered footboard and began to swing herself from window to window, scanning the compartments. At the last one of all she stopped, and I heard her give a girlish laugh and say: "My goodness, this thing's going to give way any minute!"

She reached an arm through the shattered door and leaned within. The coach groaned and swayed like a wreck in heavy surf. She reappeared, dragging with her a small girl. For a moment, she stood poised with the child in her arms before leaping down to the embankment.

She rolled a few yards, picked up the child, and came panting with her to my side, laughing lightly with relief. "She's perfectly all right, Dick. You must take her home with you and tuck her up in bed."

She looked beyond me at a number of storm-lanterns bobbing across the snow towards us. Help had arrived. For her, the girl was no longer of interest. Other duties, equally urgent, demanded her care, and she left us.

As she strode off, my loathing mounted to fury. Why had she exercised such heroism to rescue the child if the next moment she abandoned her? The girl, sobbing, tugged my hand. I put my ear to her mouth. She said: "I've lost my kitten in a basket." Throughout our long trudge home, she sobbed softly to herself, chiefly out of concern for the kitten.

We had reached Rowlands's when the wind took on a new note. Behind us, there was a sudden tearing sound followed by a low, diminishing roar. I was just in time to see the last convulsive jerks of the coach as it came finally to rest at the foot of the embankment, having carried the larch with it.

Nurse Ffoulkes's hand was also much in evidence when we arrived home. The tramp was competently making tea for throngs of excited newcomers and disposing them as best he could in the downstairs rooms. I was in no mood or condition to help him. Clasping the little girl's hand, I struggled upstairs to my bedroom.

In those days, I was able to throw off a paroxysm more quickly than I can now. It has always been a violent process. I could do no more for my charge than draw back the clothes from the foot of the bed and motion her to get inside. She must have made a woeful figure, suspicious and not a little scared. I could spare her no sympathy but, by scowls and gestures, forced her to take off shoes, coat and bonnet, and climb into bed, where she lay motionless, heaving an occasional sob and watching me with terror.

Presently, my coughing subsided. I took off my outer clothes and lay down at my end of the bed, breathing freely. My thoughts turned upon Nurse Ffoulkes, who, I felt, was responsible for the shame of the girl's presence. Sobs shook the bed. I took no notice. But the sobs continued bitterly and hopelessly.

At last, I jumped angrily up and shook her shoulder. "What on earth's the matter?" She would not reply. Her eyes stared into mine. My heart softened. "What's your name?"

"Dorothy."

"You're safe with me. Soon your mummy will come. Why are you crying?"

"My kitten. I lost my kitten in the basket."

I cried: "Oh, confound the kitten!" but realized the uselessness of bullying. To pacify her, I questioned her about the kitten. It was in a padded, dome-shaped basket of wicker with a blue ribbon tied to the handle.

The value to her of this kitten came home to me vividly. I should have felt the same about my own pigeons. Yet to look for a small wicker basket in all that welter of storm and snow was lunacy. Her sobs were small muffled explosions. I listened to them for a while in exasperation, knowing very well what they were driving me to do, then put on my clothes again, patted her head and told her that I would go out and look for the kitten.

Surprisingly, I found it fairly quickly. The basket was lying on its side, sheltered by the cabin trunk on which the woman had sat with the baby in her arms. A lively mew told me that all was well within. I returned an hour after setting out, utterly exhausted.

Needless to say, Dorothy had meanwhile dropped asleep. Because I had been of service to her, I looked on her with affection. I set the basket on the bed beside her head and plumped on a chair to look at her. A lock had fallen round the flushed cheek and a thumb had fallen from the half-open lips. The love denied me by my mother's absence began to warm my blood. I untied the basket's blue ribbon and raised the lid. The kitten arched its back, poked its head out, twitched its whiskers and, of all things, curled itself up in the basket again.

I felt that I could not gaze at the two of them long enough. Serenity filled me. I saw that I had been driven to love the little girl only out of sympathy with her distress at losing a kitten. Personal emotions had been roused, nothing more. Yet Nurse Ffoulkes so loved her fellow men that she had gone into the snow without any such emotion, purely as a duty, and she had risked her life on the tottering coach not even for a nice little girl with a kitten, but on the off-chance that such a girl was there, or, for that matter, anyone, the most criminal or disgusting of mankind, whoever might be in need of rescue!

I was ashamed and bewildered. Some little glimpse was given me of the infinite love Nurse Ffoulkes possessed. For a little while, I saw love as an impersonal and sometimes unpleasant duty. Father Damien had kissed lepers on the mouth and shuddered with revulsion while doing so. My eyes turned to the sleeping child and I was filled with humble reverence for this woman whom I had so wickedly slighted.

No doubt I slept. Then the door was flung open and Nurse Ffoulkes came within my blurred vision. She said: "Dick, why ever aren't you in bed? Your boots are wet through and you know your chest's weak." The voice was as detached as ever, neither kind nor unkind. She entered the room and saw Dorothy. A shade reproachfully she said: "This child ought to have been undressed. Whatever's this wet basket doing on the bedclothes?"

As she approached and picked up the basket, I rose to my feet. Uncontrollable anger was mounting within me. I cried unsteadily: "Put the basket down!"

She ignored me except to say: "I cannot allow a cat in a bedroom, let alone on a child's pillow," and was turning round to put basket and kitten outside the room when I attacked her with clumsy savagery, kicking her shins and clutching her wrists so that she was forced to let the basket drop. I was shouting hysterically:

"Get out, go away, you hateful, awful old woman! You let gipsies sleep in mother's bed, you bring in all the riff-raff out of the ditches, you fill my home with—with—go away, leave us in peace, get out of our house!"

Either I was too strong for her or she was taken by surprise, for I pushed her outside and locked the door on her. I found myself sweating and trembling, on the verge of tears. Dorothy had merely turned in her sleep. The kitten had returned to the basket.

I sometimes think it was the wickedest thing I ever did. Oddly enough, I triumphed. As soon as the house was clear of refugees, she left, and my father and I looked after ourselves with every success. Some time later, she told my mother that I was difficult and in need of discipline. Mother knew her sister and replied that she had never known me fail to respond to love.

The paradox of it all was that it was Nurse Ffoulkes who had first shown me the nature of love.

THE END

Mrs. Grand National

by *ERIC BENNETT*

To the Tophams of Aintree, the turf's most exciting steeplechase is a family heirloom. Yet Mirabel, chairman of the company which runs it, is often too busy to watch the finish

WHEN THE LEADERS of the Grand National field gallop at full stretch towards the last fences of Britain's most gruelling and thrilling horse race it is a fair bet that one out of the 250,000-odd spectators on Aintree racecourse will be too busy to watch. For Mrs. Mirabel Topham finds that while the race is on "there are no other distractions, so I have a chance to check up on anything that has gone wrong."

Mirabel Topham, a forceful and charming woman in the fifties, is really "Mrs. Grand National." She is chairman of Tophams, Ltd., the family company which runs the Aintree course just outside Liverpool, and which stages, among other famous races, the Grand National.

The Topham saga began well over a century ago. Edward William Topham, a Yorkshireman, became clerk of the course at Chester in the early years of the nineteenth century. His energy rescued the course from a decline, and his skill as a handicapper won him a national reputation and a nickname—"The Wizard." Accordingly, the promoters of a steeplechase at Maghull in Lancashire called him in when things were not going well. The race was transferred to Aintree, and the first National there was won by a horse named Lottery in 1839. In 1843 the race became a handicap and The Wizard became the handicapper. Five years later, racing at Liverpool had become so absorbing for Topham that he took a lease of the course from Lord Sefton.

Since then the Tophams have reigned at Aintree. Edward William was succeeded by his sons, Christopher and Joseph. In 1899 the family formed a private company. Today, Arthur Ronald Topham is joint manager of the company with his wife Mirabel, who is the chairman. The younger generation is represented on the board by James Bidwell, grandson of Christopher Topham. Except for a few small lots that are owned by intimate friends, all the shares in the company are held by Tophams and their relatives.

All the vast stands, stables, cottages, office buildings, rails, jumps and the intricate paraphernalia of Britain's largest enclosed racecourse have been put up by generations of Tophams, and although the course is still held on lease from Lord Sefton, the firm has an option to buy. Mr. and Mrs. Topham live "over the shop." Their home, Paddock Lodge, is actually on the course, just behind the stands, and from it Mrs. Topham directs the all-year-round preparations for the great race. Yet in this atmosphere of steeplechasing she remains a business woman rather than a racing enthusiast.

"I hardly ever bet," she says. "From what I have seen of it, I would sooner be a bookmaker than a punter." But she admits backing one winner, even if she picked it by unorthodox methods. "When I first came to Aintree"—she tells the story with a grin—"I knew that a Grand National winner had to have stamina and strength. I took one look at the back view of Master Robert—and laid a bet on the strength of his hindquarters. After he had won—that was in 1924—I heard that he had actually once been used to pull a cart."

Mrs. Topham's pride at Aintree is the intercommunication system between all parts of the course, which comes into full play on Grand National day. Nerve centres of the system are two large switchboards in the weighing room. One is the telephone exchange, which links offices and stands with every jump, gate and racecard-selling booth.

"That last link is most important," explains Mrs. Topham, "because it is a difficult business keeping an even supply of racecards moving to the points where they are needed. We do not have a lot of trouble with sellers of unofficial cards, though, of course, sometimes they operate in the road outside.

"One year a French owner bought a card from one of the outside sellers and made a big tote bet on the horse that turned out to be the National winner. Unfortunately, his card did not give the horse its right number, and as all tote bets are made by the number of the horse, the Frenchman found that he had really backed a loser."

The second switchboard in the weighing room operates the loudspeaker system by which announcements can be made to any part of the course. So big is the area enclosed by the four-and-a-half mile National course that in the middle the Tophams run a 150-acre farm, mostly arable, but with a few cows and pigs.

Danger At Canal Turn

A permanent staff of thirty-two maintenance men and groundsmen, usually augmented by another score of casual employees, are kept busy all the year round. The groundsmen, besides their work on the turf and the jumps, have the arduous job of "badging"—cutting by hand the grass that grows under the miles of rails. Recently, they have been putting up new fencing between the course and the canal which runs parallel with it from the jump known as the Canal Turn. At the last meeting a riderless horse ran out of the course near this point, and jumped straight into the canal.

"That is not unusual," says Mrs. Topham. "The horses seem to take the canal for a road and try to jump on to it, and we always have a ramp there ready to be wheeled up so that the horse can be led out of the water. Unfortunately, this horse had had a throat operation and had been tubed; although a man held his head up while the ramp was fetched the poor animal was drowned. So now we are putting up a fence."

Another job which has kept the groundsmen busy this year has been that of laying out the new course named after the late Lord Mildmay, whose feats as an owner-rider in the National

Mirabel Topham with "Old Johnny" Prescott, who has worked at Aintree for fifty-four years

Last year's thrill: Freebooter, co-favourite, nearly unseats J. Power—and goes on to win. The Tophams have organized every National since 1839

and throughout the country endeared him to the racing public.

One of the snags about preparing for the big race is that, although work is going on all the year round, most of the finishing touches have to be left until the last moment. The seats cannot be put out until just before the meeting. The jumps, which have been used for other races two days before, have to have their final dressing and topping up. Then, when the meeting starts, hundreds of extra workers move into their jobs, and the hundreds of police needed to control the crowds operate from the station on the course.

Mrs. Topham has had plenty of practice at tackling last-minute rush jobs. Aintree was requisitioned at the outbreak of war, but when racing was resumed the Army agreed to leave in mid-February, 1940. They left a considerable mess behind them, and the Tophams had about a month in which to organize the race. They managed that all right, and the late Lord Derby made a special point of congratulating Mrs. Topham for her fine effort in maintaining the National tradition.

But with the fall of France the Army came back again, and Mrs. Topham had a bitter and successful series of fights to prevent them from laying concrete roads across the course and tearing down all the jumps. She also saved the famous Chair—an iron grill enclosure on a tall block of stone, which stands beside the open ditch jump. This has stood for more than a century and was once the timekeeper's seat.

"My funniest recollection of the war years," says Mrs. Topham, "is of the time, towards the end, when the Americans were billeted in the stands. They had drunk Liverpool almost dry and were searching the countryside for pubs with any stock left. Yet, if they had only known it, they were sitting right on top of an enormous stock of liquor. Thousands of pounds worth of beers, wines and spirits had been bricked up in the cellars beneath the stands."

When, after the war, Mrs. Topham had to make another last-minute effort to stage the 1946 Grand National, she was asked which stand should be put in order first. "Never mind the stands," she answered. "The stables are the first priority. The public will be willing to stand on soapboxes to see the first postwar National, but the horses *must* be looked after."

Mrs. Topham and her staff know the superstitions and idiosyncracies of all the leading steeplechase trainers, and they try to allot each one of them their "lucky" or favourite boxes. Some trainers want their horses to be put in a box used by a former winner, some always like to use the same stables.

Horse To Beat The Field

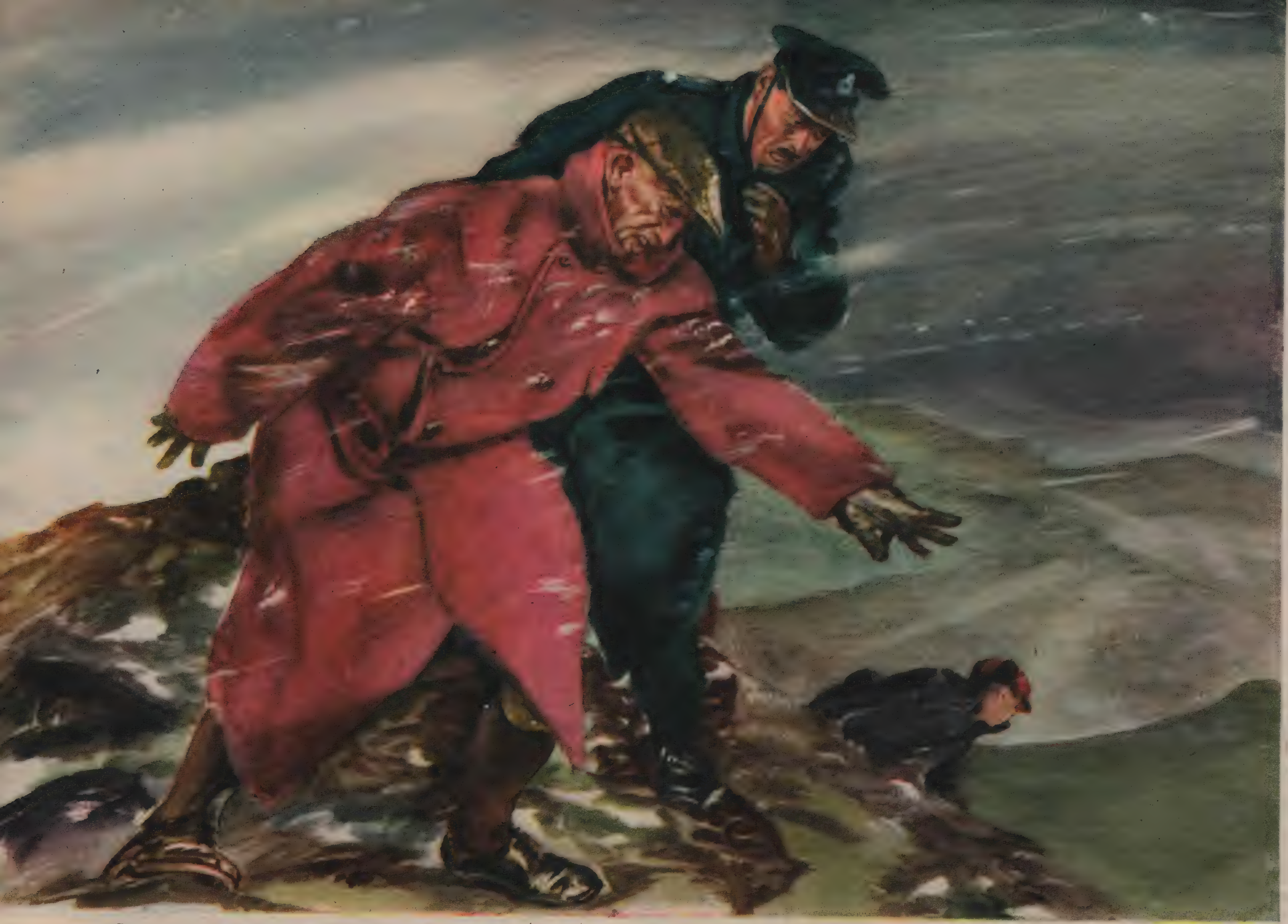
Arthur Topham says that the finest race he has ever seen was the 1938 National, when young Bruce Hobbs on Battleship just got home by a head from Royal Danieli. "But the best National horse I ever saw was Jerry M., which won in 1912, carrying the top weight of 12 st. 7 lb. He finished so fresh that I believe he could have gone round again. If all the National winners could be started in one race over the course, I would take Jerry M. to beat the field."

The Tophams are served by a tried and loyal staff. Arthur Daniels, the bailiff, has been in charge for many years, but the real veteran of Aintree is Johnny Prescott. "Old Johnny" is now seventy-three and has been working for the Tophams for fifty-four years. He turns his hand to anything on the racecourse. On National day this year he will be at his usual post at Anchor Bridge, in charge of the gates that shut off the Melling Road. Johnny's parents moved to Aintree, in sight of the course, when he was one year old, and, with the exception of the years when he was in the Army during the Kaiser's war, he has seen every National since he was five years old.

"They used to give us a holiday on National day, because it was too dangerous for us to get through the crowds to Aintree village school," says Johnny. "So I used to go to the races. I've been seeing Nationals now for nearly seventy years. And what's more," he adds with a wrinkled grin, "I've never backed the winner—not even in 1946, when I wheeled out the cloths for the horses before they were led into the paddock. I looked down at the cloths and the top one of the pile was marked for Lovely Cottage. I told all my mates, and every man on the racecourse staff took the tip and backed it—except me. Of course, it won."

Johnny Prescott has had so many close-ups of thrills in the most dangerous and thrilling of all races that the excitement has become routine. "Men knocked out, horses with broken legs being shot, collisions in mid-air, every mortal kind of disaster—I've seen 'em all. But the worst thing I remember," he chuckles, "was when we had a cloudburst at a summer meeting two years ago and I was almost swept out of my little hut at Anchor Bridge on the flood."

Old Johnny, one of the unknown key men down the course, is hoping this year to back the winner at last. Mrs. Topham, busily dodging from the seclusion of Topham's box to the key points of the central organization, will be working to make another winner for the family business which has made the Grand National worthy of its name. THE END



"Sure you weren't dreaming?" Inspector Bracegirdle shouted against the wind. "Dreaming be damned!" the man shouted back. "Look, what's yon?"

SIXTY YEARS ON

by THURMAN WARRINER

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

Somewhere on these fells was the field marshal. And, dead or alive, he must be found. That was the order

At seven o'clock one Friday evening a saloon car stopped outside the police station at Holtrigg, a little town on the bleak uplands that sweep from Blackwinter over to Penley Fell, and Sergeant Strake came in to say that someone was asking for Inspector Bracegirdle. He hadn't given a name, but he looked important.

Inspector Bracegirdle consented to see him, and the visitor, darkly dressed and wearing a bowler hat, was brought in. He approached the seated inspector and murmured confidentially, whereupon Bracegirdle rose smartly from his chair and asked him to be seated.

"I wouldn't have thought you'd ever heard of me, sir," he said respectfully. "Or of Holtrigg either, for that matter."

"To be quite frank, I hadn't, till a few hours ago." The man scrutinized the inspector, noting his taut frame, the angular face with its black lozenge of moustache. "I want to impress upon you at the outset that our conversation must not be repeated in any circumstances."

"Conversations in this room never are, sir, unless it's in the magistrates' court on the floor above."

"I'm not impugning your discretion," the man said with a slight smile. "But this is more than an ordinary matter. I'm afraid you won't even be able to confide in your colleagues." He leaned forward. "I suppose, Inspector, you're familiar with the name of Urmestone?"

It was Bracegirdle's turn to smile. "Field Marshal Sir Stuart Urmestone? Oh, yes! I should be, considering that he was born in Holtrigg and so was I. I've heard my father say that he used to play conkers with him when they were boys together. The family seat isn't occupied now, of course. It's a training college."

The visitor said, bluntly: "It may interest you to know that's he's disappeared."

From force of habit, Bracegirdle sat down again behind his desk and drew a sheet of paper towards him.

"He was appointed head of a vital military mission to the Near East. . . . But you'll know all about that from your newspapers, I dare say. Most of his staff left yesterday. The field marshal was expected to follow this morning. But he didn't turn up at the airport, and when inquiries were made at his home it transpired that he wasn't there. Naturally, we've dropped a security curtain. The Press want to know this and that, but they've been given nothing but the usual soothing-syrup about sudden illness and a nursing home."

"And where do I come in, sir?"

"We've good reason to believe that he's made for this district. Until last Monday week, as a matter of fact, he *was* in a nursing home. May be suffering from loss of memory. You'll appreciate the position we're in. Urmestone is a figure of world importance. If we begin hunting for him up here, officially, the news is going to leak. And anyway, you local fellows know the terrain."

Bracegirdle chewed it over for a moment, then asked briskly for the usual data—the time and place Urmestone was last seen, what he was wearing, what evidence there was to show that he had actually travelled in the direction of Holtrigg, and so on.

When he had written it all down, he looked squarely at his visitor. "I appreciate the compliment," he said dryly, "and you can take it from me that if Urmestone can be found, alive

Continued on page 26

Geraldo, tycoon of sweet music

Prosperous and self-assured, the one-time cinema pianist is now Britain's top business man of rhythm. Yet there is one chink in his armour

by LAWRENCE EARL

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM KEMP

With his wife in their Berkeley Square home. Geraldo's annual turnover runs into six figures

IN THE TWENTY YEARS that Geraldo, the dance band leader, has been at the top of his profession, he has earned a reputation as a strict disciplinarian with great powers of concentration and an iron will. These qualities made him what he is today: top "sweet music" band leader in the nation, controller of ten orchestras aboard ocean liners, musical adviser to the Blackpool Tower Company, and the employer of three hundred instrumentalists, with a hundred others he can call on when he needs them. He also makes up to forty-eight sides of gramophone recordings each year and has broadcast for the B.B.C. nearly 10,000 times.

With all these activities, he has an annual turnover well into six figures. "The fact is that Gerry is more of an orchestral executive than a great musician," a former employee said recently. "No detail is too small to rate his attention."

This was illustrated one day last summer in Blackpool, when a friend from London called in to see him. After a short conversation, the visitor rose to go. "I expect I'll be seeing you in the morning, Gerry," he remarked.

"As a matter of fact," Geraldo replied, "I'm taking the first plane down to London."

"You are? I thought you were going to be here at least another month. What are you going to town for?"

Geraldo believes that perfect grooming is vital for a man in the public eye. He ran a well-manicured hand, gleaming with a star sapphire ring given to him by his wife, over his sleek, greying hair. "To tell the truth," he said, "I'm flying there to have a haircut."

Tinted His Carnation Blue

This minute attention to detail crops up in Geraldo's activities time after time and tends to reveal at least part of the reason for his success as a businessman band leader. For example, when conducting in tails, he always wears a white carnation because he believes the flower lends a touch of elegance to his appearance. Once, when he was filming in *Dance Hall*, a technician explained that his dress shirts were tinted blue to prevent too much reflected glare from the strong lights. "Is that so?" Geraldo pondered. Next day, when he reported for shooting, he had his carnation tinted blue to match his shirt.

Now in his late forties, Geraldo dresses immaculately—he buys eight new suits each year—and has been referred to in print as "the sleekest maestro of the dance world," but, with pouching eyes, developing jowls and thickening waistline, he is beginning to show that he is well past the first flush of youth. Nevertheless, through hard work and much rehearsing, he grimly holds on to his place in the musical sun. For the past five years he has topped a musical weekly's poll as best "sweet" band in Britain. "He likes work," Mrs. Isobel Raison, seven years his secretary, declares. "It's his hobby."

His simple system for accomplishing as much as he does, according to David Miller, his B.B.C. producer, is to work long hours and to concentrate on what he's doing at the moment. "He eats, sleeps and thinks of nothing but keeping on top of the pile," Miller adds. He can, if necessary, be ruthless in getting what he wants.

Once, for example, an ageing and temperamental woman singer appeared as guest artist in one of his radio shows. During rehearsals she had difficulty in reaching her top notes. She excused herself in various ways. "It's too early in the morning for me," she said the first time she failed. Then she blamed the position of the microphone. The third time she declared that her nerves reacted badly to broadcasting. Finally, as the hour of the broadcast approached, Geraldo gently but firmly interrupted her latest alibi.

"Look," he said, "don't you think you're getting a bit past it? If you try it a note lower, you'll find you're all right." A hush hung over the studio as the entire orchestra and the B.B.C. technicians braced themselves for the expected temperamental outburst. Instead, the soprano replied meekly: "Perhaps you're right, Mr. Geraldo. I'll try the lower note." She did, and the programme went on as scheduled.

Geraldo was born as Gerald Bright, one of twin brothers, in London's Clerkenwell district, the son of a tailor. He and brother Sidney began taking lessons on the piano at the tender age of six. He attended Hugh Myddelton School (of which he is now a governor) but left when he was fourteen for a 30s.-a-week job in a City drapery warehouse. Even then full of ambition, he took an evening job playing the piano in a cinema in the Old Kent Road. This doubled his earnings. Several months later, he heard of a vacancy as organist at Lyons' Strand Corner House. The minor detail that he had never played the organ did not prevent him from applying for the post.

"What experience have you had?" he was asked.

"Oh, all sorts," he replied grandly. He was hired and, the following Saturday evening, reported for duty. When he sat down to play

"Slickest maestro of the dance world," they call Geraldo. Every year he buys eight new suits

he noticed the dozen stops on the instrument for the first time and began to doubt his ability, but, pretending confidence, he pulled them all out and began to play. He got the sack. He had insured his future for all eventualities, however, by planting a friend at the cinema piano, and moved back to the old job. Then, in what spare time he could find, he took organ lessons. Three months later, he again visited Lyons' musical director.

"Hallo, *you* again?" the musical director greeted him. "What is it you want this time?"

"I'd like a job playing the organ."

"And what makes you think you can play any better now?"

"I've taken lessons," Gerry responded. Impressed by his nerve, the director hired Bright again. He soon became such a success that he was playing luncheon sessions at one restaurant, tea at another and dinner at a third. His salary was now £12 10s. a week.

Some months later, feeling that, as a wage-earner, he had become a man of parts, and resenting the fact that his family still considered him, at seventeen, not quite an adult, he ran away from home. He found a position as pianist in a ship which divided its time between the transatlantic run and Mediterranean cruises. Unlike today, members of ships' orchestras did not sign on as crew members, but travelled as second-class passengers with equivalent privileges. One day, he was walking the deck smoking a cigarette when a ship's officer called to him. "Bright, the captain wants to see you." The pianist climbed up to the bridge, still holding his cigarette.

"I'll Put You In Irons!"

"Put that cigarette out at once!" the crusty old skipper demanded. The boy asked why he should do so. "Never mind why. That's an order!"

"You can't give me orders," Bright replied. "I have the status of a passenger."

"Not in my ship," the captain roared. "If I ever see you smoking on deck again, I'll put you in irons!" Gerry put the cigarette out but smouldered inside. Later, when he tried to send a cable of complaint to the head office of the shipping line, the message was not transmitted. Then, when the ship stopped at Gibraltar, none of the band was allowed on shore. This only made the youngster the more determined. Finally, he arranged for a passenger to dispatch a message from Gibraltar for him. Head office promptly sent the skipper a rocket, and the matter was settled to Bright's satisfaction.

It was not long after this that Gerry decided that shipboard life was not for him. In 1924, he formed his first orchestra and took it to the Metropole Hotel in Blackpool. The following year he took his band to the Majestic Hotel, in St. Annes-on-Sea, and remained there for five years. Then he decided to try his luck in London, but had none. He was so down in the dumps at this juncture that he resolved to give up music and, instead, try coffee-planting in Brazil. He did reach Brazil, but was at once captivated by the South American rhythms and returned to England in 1930 to form a tango orchestra.

This was his moment of great opportunity. The orchestra was given an audition by London's Savoy Hotel. Gerry was signed for two months and remained for ten years. On signing the contract a Savoy Hotel official said: "Bright, what are we going to call this orchestra? How about the Los Gauchos Tango Orchestra?" Businessman Bright demurred. "Why not call it Geraldo and his Tango Orchestra?" he suggested. "Too much like Soho," the official snorted. "That sort of thing is not for the Savoy."

Gradually, however, on outside engagements, the orchestra leader became known as Geraldo, a name given to him by his Latin musicians. Then, in 1933, when the band was invited to play in the Royal Command Performance at the Palladium, it was billed, at Gerry's request, as Geraldo and his Tango Orchestra. Next morning, the Savoy Hotel official sent for him and heaped compliments on his Palladium showing. He added, almost as an afterthought, "Oh, by the way, Bright, would you mind if we use the name Geraldo in our publicity?" Gerry had won his point. He has been Geraldo ever since.

A couple of years later, looking critically into his future, he wondered how much longer the tango craze would last. When Eric Maschwitz, then Director of Variety for the B.B.C., suggested that he form an orchestra "like Paul Whiteman uses in America," Gerry jumped at the chance. The break from Latin rhythm was a marked success.

During the war, Geraldo became associated with Ensa and took his band to the troops, first in the Mediterranean theatre, later to North-West Europe. Once, on his way by air from Tunis to Bari, his aircraft crash-landed into a field of deep mud. Almost miraculously, no one was scratched, but, since then, Gerry has had a strong antipathy towards air travel.

When the Germans were sending flying bombs to Britain, Gerald, with Bryan Michie of the B.B.C. and Margaret Harper-Nelson, then of Ensa but now casting director for Ealing Studios, were driving home from a broadcast when they heard the ominous buzz of a guided missile overhead. "Let's stop and find shelter," Miss Harper-Nelson suggested. "I'm nervous about those doodle-bugs."

"Nonsense," Geraldo retorted. "I'm a fatalist: if I were going to be killed violently I'd have had it in my crash-landing in Italy. Let's drive on."

"That's all right for you, Gerry," Michie chimed in, "but Margaret and I weren't in the plane. It doesn't apply to us."

"That's so," Geraldo admitted. They stopped and found shelter.

Subtle Change At The Mike

In addition to his radio, gramophone recording and dance sessions (he has played everything from provincial ballrooms to Buckingham Palace), Geraldo also appears with his band in music halls for up to twelve weeks a year. Yet, in spite of his long history of facing the public, and striving for sartorial and musical perfection, he never seems quite at ease when announcing his own numbers from a stage.

A former associate blames this on his knowledge that there is still a trace of cockney in his accent. Thus, when he approaches the microphone to address his audience, a subtle change seems to come over the elegant, still-handsome and usually confident leader. His hands rest with unaccustomed awkwardness over his stomach, he seems to slouch slightly, almost apologetically, to the mike and he delivers his lines as if he were glad to get rid of them. "Everything is still meticulously correct," one of his friends says, "but he does seem to lack spontaneity and never seems to get right down there with his audience."

This chink in Geraldo's armour is more than compensated for by the rigid control he keeps over his musicians. "You feel like a new boy at school when you first join up in his band," one of his instrumentalists said. "All the members are afraid of making a *faux pas*. It's his death-ray look that does it."

Earning "Fabulous Salaries"

Nevertheless, the men he employs have been with him for a long time, as dance orchestra musicians go. His pianist is twin brother Sid, who has been with him fifteen years. Jack Collier, his bass player, has stayed for twelve, and Ivor Mairants, his guitarist, for ten. The average tenure of employment of his seventeen regular instrumentalists has been five years, and they get paid what Geraldo calls "fabulous salaries." This means, he says, between £2,000 and £3,000 a year. "To earn it," he declares, "they must be sober characters and must be prepared for a certain amount of discipline."

He has orchestras in the *Queen Mary*, the *Mauretania*, the *Caronia*, the *Franconia* and the *Samaria*. As musical adviser to the Blackpool Tower Company, he must supply orchestras for the Tower Ballroom, the Winter Gardens Ballroom, the Baronial Hall, the Palace Ballroom, the Grand Theatre, the Palace Theatre, the Opera House and several large restaurants. He visits incoming or outgoing ships to check on the behaviour of his bands and drops in on Blackpool dozens of times each year.

Recently he was asked how he maintains discipline over so many musicians at once. "That's simple," Geraldo replied. "A band behaves as the leader does."

THE END

How Rask's crew was hauled ashore

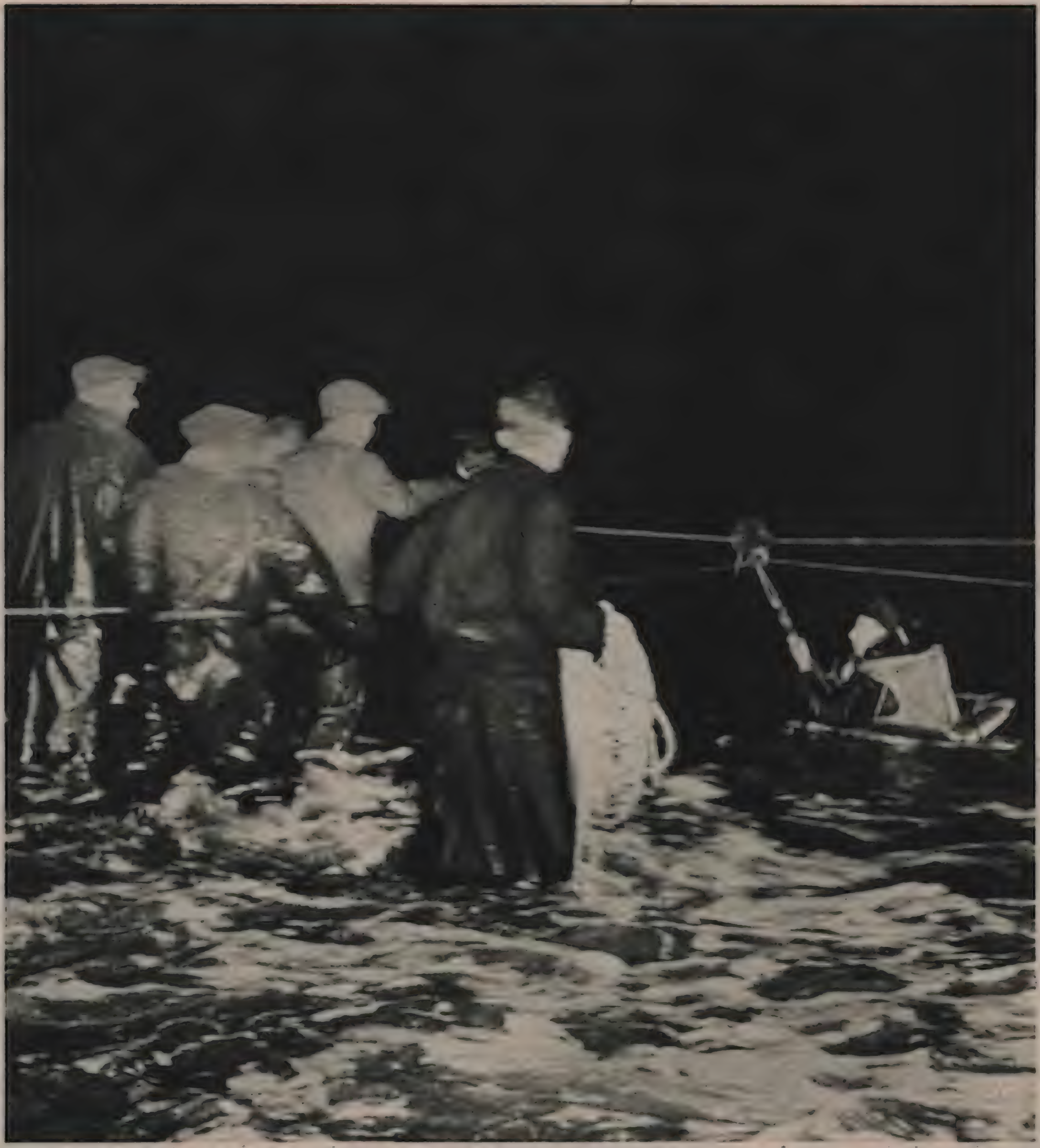
by KEITH ELLIS

FOR THE RECORD

A JOHN BULL SPECIAL

On the "Rask," men wait for rescue

Climax to the grim drama of Saltpanhoe beach—rescue by coastguards of fourteen men trapped on the coaster *Rask* as she lay on the gale-swept rocks, 400 yards from land



In a breeches buoy, one of the *Rask's* crew nears shore. It took eleven hours to complete the rescue

AROUND NOON, there being nothing more he could do at the moment, District Officer George Heppel, of His Majesty's Coastguard, Berwick, decided to call the wreck inspector, Commander C. A. de W. Kitcat, who commanded the North-Eastern Division. Nearly 400 yards offshore, thirty-foot waves were crashing over the Norwegian motor vessel *Rask* which had run aground on a rocky outcrop in the early morning. An onshore gale still whipped the rescuers, and flurries of snow and sleet blinded them from time to time. The tide was nearing the flood. Huddled in the shattered wheelhouse of the *Rask* were thirteen members of the crew and one passenger. Without food and soaking wet, they prayed to be rescued before their ship broke up or they themselves died of exposure.

In the early stages the rescue had gone well. Although the Berwick lifeboat had been unable to close in, the coastguards had made contact with their second rocket, passed out the whip (a running, endless line) and hauled in Lief Dahl, the youngest member of the crew, by breeches buoy. As the buoy neared the shore, however, the whip had snapped, dropping Dahl into the raging sea. At the same time, Cecil Scott, a coastguard who had gone out to help him, was knocked unconscious by a spar. Both were dragged out in the nick of time. When another whip was passed out, it snagged on the rocks. Since then, the coastguards and volunteers of Berwick and Goswick companies of the Coast Life Saving Corps had been trying to free it.

The coastguards especially were keen to give a good account of themselves. Apart from keeping an efficient watch, their main duty is to save lives at sea. For years they had trained for just such an emergency as the *Rask*. Meanwhile, they had done the thousand and one jobs coastguards are expected to do along the coast. There was the time that Heppel had to send a fishing-boat to pick up three dogs marooned on a sandbank near Spittal. On another occasion, in answer to a trawler's signal that she had a badly wounded man aboard, they arranged to send a doctor out by lifeboat. Only the previous summer, a sheep was stranded on a cliff 200 yards north of Berwick station. Cecil Scott was lowered down the cliff and tied a bowline round its middle. Both were then hauled to safety.

Much of the coastguards' time in what they call "the silly season" is taken up with getting foolhardy holidaymakers out of difficulties. Dinghies float out to sea. Little boys get stuck on cliffs. One day a yacht ran aground in Berwick harbour with a schoolmaster and a party of schoolboys aboard. Heppel went down to investigate. After reproving the master, he asked where they were making for.

"West of Scotland," said the master. "We're going through the canal."

"Can I see your charts?" asked Heppel.

"Charts? I haven't any charts."

"Then what are you navigating with?"

"This," said the master. And he produced a school atlas.

First Test Of New Rocket

There was, however, nothing of "the silly season" in the wreck of the *Rask*. A routine report had been sent earlier to the divisional inspector's office, and was received by Commander Kitcat while he was on a visit to the Coastguard station at South Shields. He started north at once, advising Berwick Coastguard that he was doing so, and stating that he would call at the Blue Bell Hotel at Belford, on the Great North Road some fifteen miles south of Berwick, for any further messages. Unaware of this, but knowing that the inspector frequently stayed at this hotel when touring the coast, Heppel arranged for a message for the inspector to be given to the police at Belford. It read: "From D. C. Berwick. Ship ashore. Come to Scremerston beach. All same *Samtampa*."

Heppel knew this would pique the inspector's curiosity. The s.s. *Samtampa* was an American Liberty ship which had gone ashore off Porthcawl in April, 1947. In weather similar to the present, the Mumbles lifeboat had been lost with all hands. The powder-driven Boxer rocket with which the coastguards were then equipped was not strong enough to pierce the gale. All thirty-nine men aboard the *Samtampa* were drowned. Since then, the coastguards had been issued with the more powerful Rescue rocket which was now undergoing its first real test.

The inspector automatically took command when he arrived. "Bit of a tricky wreck on, sir," reported Heppel.

"How many aboard?"

"Fourteen and one rescued." After explaining what had been done, he went on: "I'm

Continued on page 24

MARGARET CHEECHOO concludes her three-part true

My life as a Red Indian's bride

Sinclair and I had married in secret. But the Swampy Cree tribe was not to be outdone. The marriage of the English girl to one of their braves must be fêted with the gay traditional dance

MY ROOM IN STEVENS HOTEL, Cochrane, was warm and the bed comfortable, but I don't think I slept very much on the night of March 2, 1950. In two days' time I was to be married to my Red Indian fiancé, Sinclair Cheechoo.

A year before I had been sleeping in my parents' home in Epsom, Surrey, still dreaming of my ambition to live and work among the Red Indians of Canada. Much had happened since then. I had come to Canada, worked in a little mission school on the tiny island of Moose Factory, Northern Ontario, and met Sinclair. The white wives on the island had not approved of my association with Sinclair. It wasn't done for a young English girl to mix with the Indians, let alone marry one. But my parents had not objected, and Sinclair and I loved each other. So on the morning of March 2 we had slipped secretly away from Moose Factory and boarded the train to Cochrane to be married.

Sinclair knocked on my door early next morning. I joined him at breakfast in the dreary hotel dining-room, and we spent the day shopping and looking at the town. In the afternoon we went to see the minister, and met a short, pleasant young man coming out of the church.

"We're looking for the Reverend Mr. Ford," I said, explaining that we wanted to get married.

"It's written all over your faces," he replied, smiling. "I'm Ford. Come right in and let's get you fixed up."

We went into the little church, the padre leading the way into the vestry, where we rehearsed the marriage service and he told us to come back at noon the next day. He walked us out of the church, an arm round each of our shoulders. Before we left he said: "Don't you worry about anything. I'll have a couple of witnesses waiting here for you."

I Got Married In Boots

We spent the evening in a little café, and next morning I got up fairly late and dressed very carefully. We couldn't afford a wedding dress, and I hadn't been able to get a suitable frock in any of the stores, so I compromised with a white silk blouse with a silk yoke and lace cuffs on the sleeve. My skirt was navy blue, and if the rest of the outfit didn't exactly match, it was the best I could do with sheepskin fur-lined boots, a green top coat, brown halo hat with a large satin bow and ribbons going a short way down my back, moose-hide mitts and a bouquet of paper carnations with some very real-looking leaves.

It didn't look like a smiling wedding morning outside the window. Snowflakes were driving crosswise and snow powder was being whipped into little whirls off the eaves of houses. For a moment I wondered about windproofs, studying my ensemble in the looking-glass, and felt they would ruin the effect, such as it was. I had sacrificed warmth for glamour, but a wedding day came once a lifetime. Damn the gooseflesh, I thought, running downstairs with butterflies fluttering in my stomach and my legs all jelly at the knees.

Sinclair had been waiting near the door of the breakfast-room for at least an hour. He was dressed in his wedding finery—the red lumber jacket I had got him for his twentieth birthday in three weeks' time, new navy blue ski pants tucked inside rubber lace-up boots, the brown sweater I had made him, a blue shirt and a lovely royal blue satin tie with a red and white design, fur gloves and a woollen balaclava cap.

"How do you feel?" I asked. He didn't have to reply.

With a quarter of an hour to go, we walked out of the hotel and up the street in the teeth of the blizzard, running all the way to keep warm. Mr. Ford was waiting in the vestry, and the two witnesses were there. Fortunately, the church was heated. In the choir room I got my coat off and was arranging my bouquet when Mr. Ford came in and suggested I had better leave it behind as there weren't any bridesmaids to take charge of it during the ceremony. So I left my lovely flowers behind, while Sinclair gave the ring to one witness and went with him to wait at the altar.

Imagined Mother Was There

I followed on the arm of the other witness, shutting my eyes tight to imagine that the church was full of guests, that the organ was playing a wedding march, that this was daddy's arm and mummy was up in front sniffing daintily into a handkerchief. I opened my eyes again to the reality of this little Canadian church, which wasn't quite finished inside, and reality was rather frightening and lonely. Then Sinclair came up on one side, and in a moment I felt better. It was Sinclair all right. There could be no mistaking the great hand the padre joined on mine; the palm was as tough as sandpaper.

Our honeymoon lasted a week and we spent it in Stevens Hotel. We also did a bit of shopping, buying a few things we needed badly like a bed, mattress, ironing board, some dishes and glass. We ate in a different café every day, and one evening we played bingo at the Canadian Legion Hall and spent four of our precious dollars—but without winning a prize.

Back at Moosonee, to our surprise, we found a big crowd waiting to welcome us at the station. They were mostly girls from the village, who climbed up on to the train congratulating us and asking when we were going to hold the wedding dance. Sinclair's cousin, William Cheechoo, was there with his sled and dogs, and Andy Fairies had also come with his tractor and trailer. So we piled everything on—bed, mattress, ironing board and all, everybody clambering up on top of it—and back we drove across the frozen river, laughing and cheering.

Andy stopped outside Sinclair's mother's cabin, I was helped down from the trailer, and the others stood around to watch Maria Cheechoo hobble out with a little snowshoe attached to the end of her crutch and welcome me home. We

Sinclair and Margaret. It was so cold she had to wear ski pants under her wedding dance dress

The trapper's cabin where Margaret lived after her marriage. It was shared with her mother-in-law

shook hands, I called her *Nigawe,* the Cree word for mother, and they cheered as I followed her across the threshold.

I had known all along that this was to be our first home and that we would have to share it with Sinclair's sister, until she married, and his mother, until she died; but I hadn't quite reckoned on the shared intimacy that living at such close quarters with other people implied. Indians are used to it and accept it frankly. I found it inhibiting and frustrating.

It was no more than a trapper's cabin of the kind that most Indian families have lived in for generations. The walls were crude and the floor consisted of rough wooden boards, covered at the bedroom end with an old piece of lino, with Christine and my mother-in-law sleeping on a board bed on one side, and Sinclair and I in our new bed on the other.

There were two stoves, for cooking and heating, kept going from a stack of chopped wood in a stack nearby. From hooks on the wall hung axes, brooms, snowshoes, skins, clothes and moccasins, and a yoke for carrying pails of water. Against one wall stood an old cupboard for plates, dishes, glass, cups and food. More clothes were draped over drying poles, and near the door was a barrel for water that had to be packed with sackfuls of clean snow every day. Some nights the snow in the water barrel would not have melted by morning. The toilet outside was even cruder and more draughty than Mary Loutit's.

Sinclair had been working in a sawmill before we had gone off to get married, but when we returned he discovered that the sawmill had broken down and he would be out of a job until it could be put right—in three weeks at the earliest. Those were three tough weeks, for we had spent all our spare cash in Cochrane. Still, we pulled through, the neighbours helping with a bit of meat whenever a moose was killed. Sometimes we'd be given a rabbit or a bit of beaver, and of course if Sinclair ever brought home a goose we would have to share it with those who had helped us.

Our Indian Wedding Dance

But the village was clamouring for a wedding dance; the girls especially would not be put off. Fortunately for Sinclair's prestige, we were able to accommodate them as soon as Stirlings paid me a week's back wages still owing.

The whole village was invited, and practically everybody wanted to help. Clara Nicoshie, the mother of a big family and owner of a large, two-storeyed house, offered her living-room as a suitable place where the dance could be held, as well as the coffee, which she was determined to make herself. We accepted gratefully and I asked her niece Emma if she would like to be bridesmaid. Emma was sixteen. She was thrilled.

There can never be a dance on Moose Factory without yards of red and white ribbon, which I had to go out and buy. Emma made it into rosettes for all the men taking part in the dance, with extra large ones for the bride, groom, bridesmaid and Billy Corston, a half-breed, who was to be best man, as well as for the fiddler, guitarists and their instruments.

Nellie Faries, the chief's wife, offered the biscuits and cookies, and Bessie Morris, an elderly half-breed, made a four-tier wedding cake, which her daughter Marjorie iced beautifully, adding a chain of pink hearts entwined all round. It was full of fruit and spice, with a ring and five-cent pieces inside, and it tasted good.

Several married girls offered their wedding dresses, and I picked one that fitted me—in white silk, with a sequin pattern round the yoke and sleeves that came down to tight-fitting cuffs. I wore it with a blue ribbon round the waist, tied in a bow at the side, with red and white bows in my hair to match the rosettes. I wore moccasins, and until the hot dancing started I kept on my ski pants under the long white skirt: this wasn't my wedding day, and there was talk of standing outside while somebody took photographs.

My bridesmaid and I changed in one of the upstairs bedrooms, and when at last we came down, the furniture had been cleared from the living-room. It had been decked with bunting and paper streamers, and everyone who could walk in the village was crowding the floor and the doorways out into the snow.

Sinclair met me at the top of the stairs in his wedding best and we came down blushing, while everybody cheered. The cake was brought in amid "oohs" and gasps of amazement. We cut the first slice holding the knife together, and then it was divided up and handed round to the multitude, except the bottom tier, which was put aside for the people who hadn't been able to come. A piece of that went home.

The guests had to take turns stamping about in the snow outside, the place was so crowded, but the children were allowed to gather on the stairs after they had had their moment on the floor scrambling for bagfuls of sweets which the best man scattered. The only white guests were a few Stirling men, a teacher from the school and two nurses. A few others had also been invited, but they never came. They said I had committed social suicide and had to expect all that was coming to me. Anyway, did it matter? I had married a pure-blooded Indian and now I was one of them. This was a new life among real people, and at that moment I was dancing every dance on the floor.

We Were Alone At Last

It was after one thirty when Sinclair and I slipped out and ran along the line of cabins with the laughter and cheering of the house following us all the way home. Our cabin was empty as we stole in, and for the first time since we had returned we were wonderfully alone. The music and laughter of the dance was still ringing in my ears as I undressed, and I could picture the girls nudging one another and giggling, just before I left, when I said I was tired and wanted to go to bed.

A perennial chore I was wedded to for life, it seemed, was that of chopping firewood—plenty of it. We burned it for cooking and heating and the stoves were always hungry; and if they hadn't been kept fed we should have frozen to death. Sinclair and I used to make a picnic of these wood-chopping expeditions. We would take the two dogs and follow them, tugging away at our little sled, down the river to a large uninhabited island a few miles away.

Sinclair would select a spot and start by making a bed of green branches and leaves in the snow and lighting a fire. This he did quite ingeniously, shaving papery strips off a block of wood with a hatchet and lighting these for a start. He'd pile on bigger chips until the fire was blazing away and strong enough to take split logs. Then he would take a strong, pliant stick, make a notch one end, drive the other end well into the ground near the fire and hook the pot packed with clean snow on to the notch. Somehow the pot's weight would bend the stick just enough to hang suspended above the fire, from where it could be pivoted round and taken off when the water was boiling.

Moose Meat Cooked In Snow

When the water boiled I would add tea. I'd cook the moose meat in snow, boiling or frying it, and we would eat it with forks out of the frying pan. With bannock, the Indian bread, and hot tea, it certainly tasted good out there. We never fed the dogs, Suky and Brownie, on a trip. They got their dinner when we returned at the end of the day—large bowls of porridge cooked with lots of fat and flour.

Sinclair cut only dry wood, the best, he said, being that of the tamarak tree. In a contrasting wilderness of dark tree trunks against a background of glaring white, Sinclair could pick the right tree unerringly and send it crashing after a few minutes' work with an axe on its base. He'd strip the branches, section the tree into convenient lengths and turn immediately to the next.

Loading was a precision job, because the weight on the sled had to be perfectly balanced, and even then it was often ditched driving along the bush trail across Moose Factory. The dogs responded to four Eskimo commands—"Huit" for Go, "Arr," Stop, "Irra," Go left; "Auk," Go right. My trouble was that I would speak to them in English. Once when we were returning, Sinclair thought he spotted a good supply of dry tamarak and stopped, going off to mark the place for his next visit. Suky and Brownie nagged and fretted impatiently. "Oh, wait!" I shouted at them. But they mistook what I said for "Huit" and off they went charging down the trail at full speed until the sled crashed into a tree and overturned.

Waiting for his job to materialize at the sawmill, Sinclair went every day to see how the repairs were going ahead, but when nothing came of it after three weeks, he decided he'd better go trapping to raise some money before we starved. I begged him to take me, as I did not relish the thought of being left behind.

We left Moose Factory early in April, taking Governor, a third dog, lent us by a friend, as we were going a good distance and would be away a month. He took the canoe in case the ice broke before we returned, lashing it on top of a long toboggan with everything we needed piled inside—tent, stove, sleeping bags, pots and pans, enamel cups and plates, knives, forks and spoons, a small washing tub, a change of underclothes for both of us, extra woollen socks, soap and towels, snowshoes, rubbers for moccasins, traps, and the gun and rifle. We couldn't take potatoes because they freeze in those temperatures, but we had a supply of tea, flour, baking powder, lard and oatmeal. For meat, our main diet, we would depend on the animals we hoped to catch.

Fortune—If We Could Bag It

We had a five-dollar licence which entitled a married man to catch a limit of thirty beavers, and as many mink, muskrat, red fox and moose as he could get—a veritable fortune in fur with beaver pelts fetching more than thirty dollars, mink forty dollars, and muskrat two dollars fifty. Unfortunately for the Swampy Crees, the average bags were far short of the limit.

Sinclair's hunting grounds were at the bottom of James Bay, in a belt of forest that stretched for about thirty miles along the shore, and we went from spot to spot camping for a day or two, while Sinclair set his traps. Then we moved on, to return to them a few days later. He knew exactly where his beaver houses were and would make a hole in the ice, setting his traps under water in front of the houses. The traps had powerfully sprung claws, and looked like terrible instruments of torture, but Sinclair said the beavers died quickly. We did moderately well that month, getting eight beaver and two muskrat.

I was busy enough at the camp while Sinclair was out trapping. We had a light two-man tent, with a cast iron stove whose funnel zigzagged up through the roof. This had to be kept going and I had to keep chopping. Then there was the cooking, washing and preparing the dogs' dinner. They were good company and quite reliable, provided you took care to keep the meat and things like snowshoes and skins out of their reach.

I wasn't really afraid of being left alone at the camp; Sinclair had assured me that a wolf does not worry about a human being unless it knows it is being hunted; besides, the Indians are being encouraged to exterminate them, so they are few and far between. Bears, he said, only came round in the summer and are inclined to be more playful than dangerous. Sinclair had killed one at Frazerdale when he was seventeen—with a kitchen knife tied to a stick—but he knew of a man out hunting who wanted to cross a creek, and was just about to do so when a bear came behind him and gave him a push that sent him over the other side. If I kept perfectly still, Sinclair added, I'd be quite safe.

Still, I always felt better when he came home in the afternoons. The memsahibs had never believed I would stick it, and that was reason enough for me to burst myself trying, but the name I acquired in the village was White Squaw. It was all I wanted, because it meant that I had come up to scratch.

There was nothing unpleasant or heroic about trapping in northern Canada under those conditions, except perhaps washing in snow and the petty inconveniences like the absence of a convenience. Our nights were snug. With a good fire burning in the stove the tent would get positively hot. I would make tea last thing at night and we'd drink it, lying in our sleeping bags, talking over the day's work and adventures. Looking back, I don't remember ever being happier.

We returned to Moose Factory early in May. The month's trapping had brought us out of the red. Soon after, Sinclair was able to pick up a few odd jobs with the construction company, but in five weeks he was out of work again, and a few weeks later, after paying our debts, we were as broke as we had ever been. There were periods when we lived exclusively on wild raspberries, which we ate straight off the bushes or made into pies.

We Hunt For Wild Duck

When we could borrow a few cartridges we would hunt for wild duck on the river. The first time we went, Sinclair made me sit very still in the bows of the canoe, keeping an eye open for our quarry, while he, sitting behind, sent the canoe gliding silently among the weeds. Somehow I just couldn't keep still enough; so many birds broke and flew away before Sinclair could reach for his gun that he decided I'd better lie down in the bottom of the canoe if we were to eat at all.

When cartridges were low we fished for white trout and sturgeon. I think I could have stuck it out because Sinclair had hopes of a few lucrative guiding jobs when the tourists came hunting in the autumn, but I suppose I have to admit that the white memsahibs broke my spirit after all.

I had thought that after my marriage they would live and let live. They didn't. The antagonism increased. In the end I couldn't even get served when I went shopping. I would have to wait, perhaps an hour, while the counter-jumpers ignored me, and I'd come home fuming. Obviously, their wives were behind it, because they cut me on the roads, and I would hear the remarks as I passed. In the end Sinclair had to do the shopping, and it wasn't very pleasant for him. I could see pressure being exerted at various points. I could see that Sinclair didn't have a chance.

"England is a white country," I told him, one day. "But at least we'd get a square deal. . . ."

Back To England And Home

That was how I planted the idea. It grew. When my parents heard of what was in our minds they offered the price of the fare home—£107 for the steamship passages; but I felt that with a job in England, Sinclair would pay them back in a couple of years.

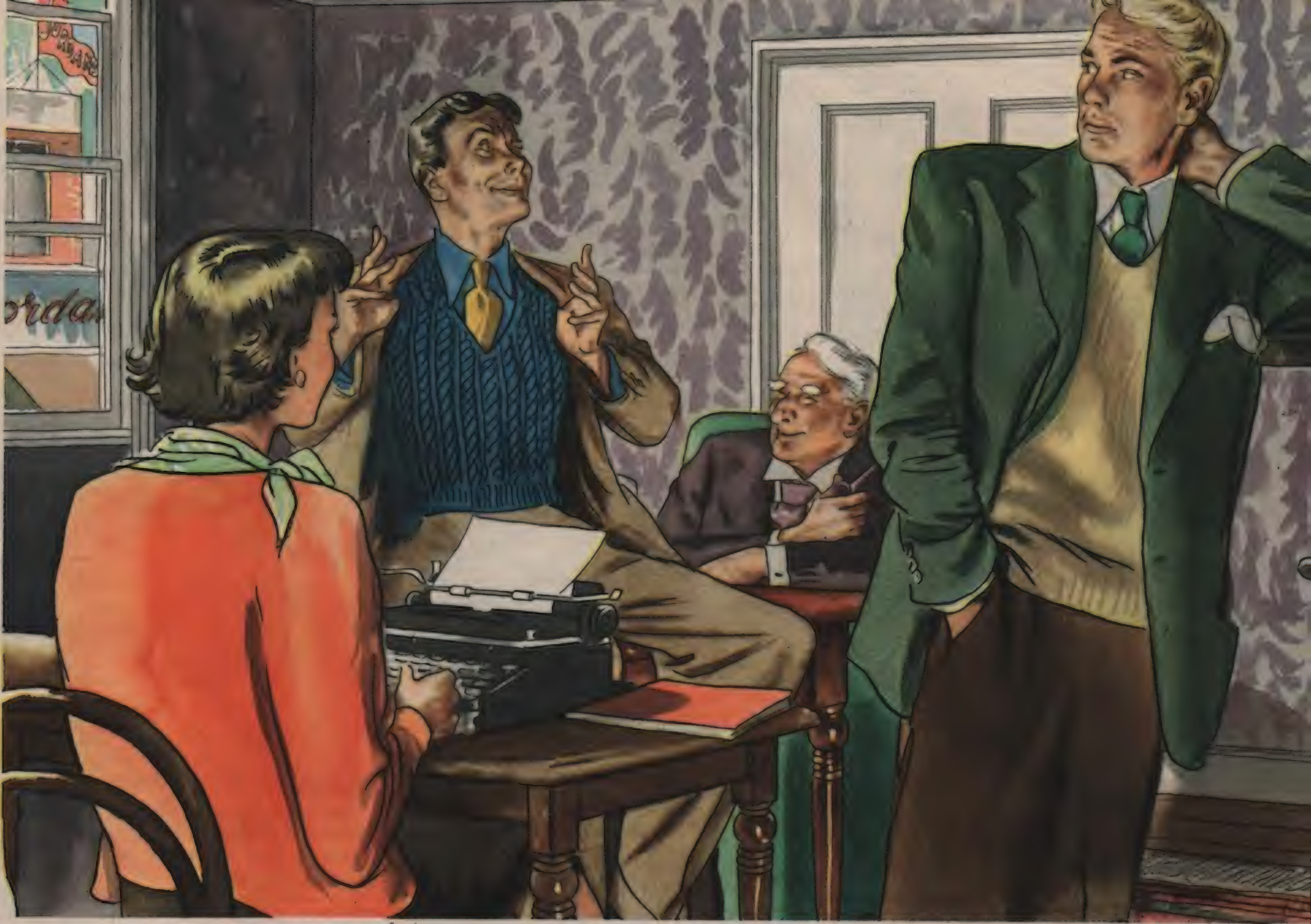
We managed to sell the dogs, the bed and the ironing board, which helped to get Sinclair fitted out in Ottawa. He needed city clothes, a sports coat and flannels, shoes and an overcoat, which he had never worn in his life; and we arrived at Tilbury in October. The first thing daddy said when we met was: "My, you do look thin. I hope you're not slimming."

We are staying with my parents until Sinclair and I can get a place of our own. He has a job with a timber merchant, felling trees. He goes to the timber yard early in the morning, and from there the gangs go out in lorries to forests in various parts of Surrey. The job is right up his alley and he likes his workmates.

The other day the boss wanted to put Sinclair in a different gang, but his foreman wouldn't part with him. When he told me about it that evening his eyes were gleaming. I don't think he needs to worry in England about being a Red Indian.

THE END

Forced by circumstances to quit Canada, the Cheechoos now live with Margaret's parents at Epsom



"You'll need a good publicity man," said Seacombe, "and that's me. I accept your offer." Theodore said stiffly: "We haven't made one yet"

FESTIVAL AT FARBRIDGE

by J. B. PRIESTLEY

It was as plain as a pikestaff that the two men weren't going to get on together. Laura loved one—but the Commodore needed them both

FOR THE TRIO WORKING behind the scenes to bring about the Festival of Farbridge, things were beginning to move, now. Laura Casey had faced a few embarrassing moments explaining to the Saxons (the couple with whom she lived) and their friends her sudden interest in Commodore Tribe's scheme—and, in particular, in Theodore Jenks, the handsome young visitor from Indonesia.

"Nobody here's bothering to do anything about a festival," she said. "although plenty of people want one." Of Commodore Tribe, she said: "He's a sort of adventurer in a way, I think, and probably a wicked old boy, the kind you feel you ought to disapprove of, but can't help liking." Theodore was harder to explain. "He's quite different. He's over here to have a look at English life, and I think he feels he'd rather do something like this than just wander about like a tourist."

She didn't have to add that Theodore attracted her. To the women, the statement wasn't necessary . . . and it was nothing to do with the men.

The Commodore, meanwhile, finding an ally in bluff, blunt Seth Hull, proprietor of the White Hart, and a man who had a finger in many of the town's affairs, had tackled his first obstacles—the Mayor and the Town Clerk. Farbridge Council, as the Commodore well knew, had already turned down the idea of a local festival. But, backed up by Seth Hull, he pressed home a skilful attack: if Farbridge had any pride it must stage a festival to show the surrounding countryside that it could rise to the occasion. He met with limited success—the Mayor agreeing to re-open the question if it could be shown there was any demand for a festival in Farbridge.

"Well now," said Seth, when they left the town hall, "yer'd better start running round a bit and starting up this public demand they talk so much about. Might run a public meeting."

"I have it in mind," said the Commodore.

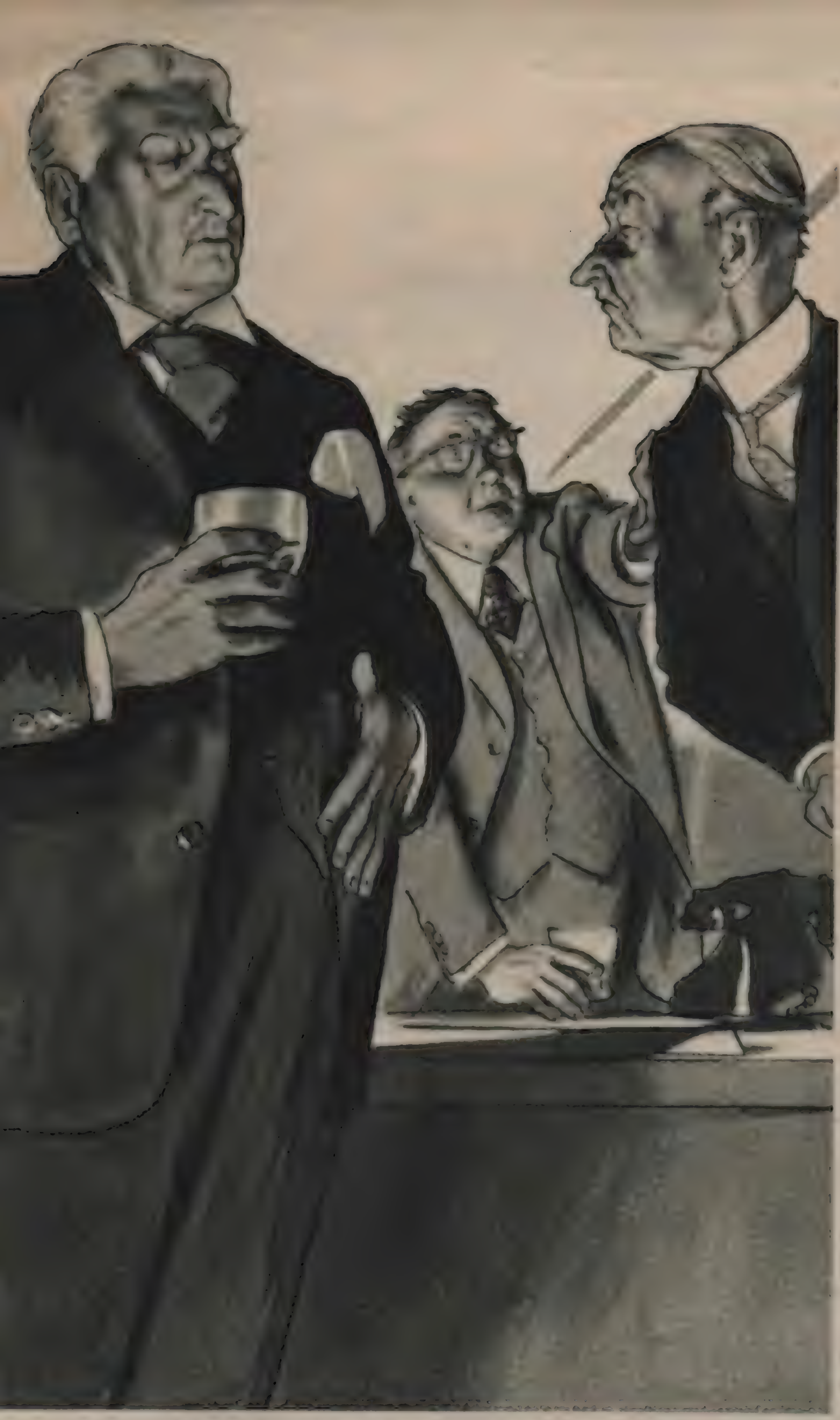
ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN PIMLOTT

PART 5

Theodore Has A Rival

THAT melancholy disused sitting-room on the second floor of the White Hart was already looking better in its new rôle of Festival office.

Its one window had been cleaned and now offered a clear view of the soft furnishings department of Jordan's Stores across the way. There was a fire in the grate, and a faded but not unpleasing rug on the hearth. The original table, minus its sad green cloth, was still there, but there was another table now, providing a desk for Laura; also another armchair and a modest chest of drawers. A cream-coloured shade had been found for the electric bulb that hung



Coverack's words worried the Commodore, but he gave no sign. Behind him, Dr. Barr was fuming

in the centre of the room. And further plans had been made.

"We haven't really done very much to it," said Theodore, just after he arrived that morning. "Yet it's surprising how different it looks."

"I thought that," said Laura, from behind her portable typewriter. "It's because the room's alive now. I believe rooms have feelings and like to be taken notice of. And this room's responding very nicely."

"I believe it is," said Theodore, smiling at her in his large, shy way. "But there must be other things I could get for it."

"There are," she told him, promptly. "But you're not to. Not yet. You remember what I said yesterday? It isn't fair for you to start buying things right and left when we don't really know what's going to happen. As it is, you must have spent about ten pounds, perhaps all for nothing."

"No, not for nothing, whatever happens. I'm enjoying this, and after all I came over here to enjoy something as well as to learn something."

"I don't know about enjoying," she said, darkly, "but I'll bet you'll learn plenty about good old England before we're through with this." She looked at him speculatively for a moment or two, and then, before he could ask her what was the matter, she went swiftly to the door, glanced out and listened there, and returned to stand looking at him again.

"What's the matter, Laura?"

"Have you lent the Commodore any money?"

"No. He's never asked me. Why?"

"Well, you're not to, that's all." She listened a moment, then continued hurriedly in a low voice: "Look—I like the Commodore. He's fun, and in a way a darling old boy. But I wouldn't trust him a yard with any money. I don't mean he'd deliberately swindle anybody. But I'm sure he's careless and extravagant and rather unscrupulous about borrowing and never paying back. I've met the type before."

"Well," he said, almost apologetically, "so have I. Plenty of them out East, you know, Laura."

"I nearly took him on one side on Wednesday afternoon, after we first talked about this Festival scheme, to tell him he wasn't to start borrowing your money. But then I thought I didn't know him well enough."

"I'm glad you didn't, Laura. It might have spoilt everything."

"No, it wouldn't," she said shrewdly. "He can take it. But it was too soon then." She waited a moment, looking hard at him. "It would spoil everything for me, though, if I knew he'd begun borrowing your money. I know—it's your money. But it would make everything here seem *ugly*. So—will you do something for me?"

"Of course."

"Promise me—solemnly—you won't lend him any money."

"All right," he told her. "I promise—solemnly—I won't lend him anything."

"Thank you, Theodore." She put paper in her machine, and began typing hard.

THE Commodore, when he arrived, was wearing a stiff linen collar with immense wings and a grey tie so fat that it was almost a stock. Possibly he had also done something to his fine shock of hair.

The total effect was not only more urbane but had something senatorial about it. He suggested a distinguished Dominion Premier on holiday but not above discussing Commonwealth relations over lunch at Chequers.

"Well, children," he said, "to work. A conference—a conference! And, by the way, I must congratulate you on having improved this place. But a few touches are still lacking."

"It's this horrible wallpaper," said Laura.

"What we want, to cover it up, are posters of other festivals," said the Commodore. "Make a note of it, please, Laura. Then let's look at your list of friends and enemies." After smoking at his copy for a minute or so, he said: "To save time we'll have to tackle people separately. Now I'd better take over the political personages, the Town Hall gang, because I already know the atmosphere. But this chap Jordan, of Jordan's Stores. He's a possible ally. He has money and influence. But he's an eccentric old boy, I'm told. Now he won't want to see me—I'm nearly an eccentric old boy myself. You two ought to tackle him. Laura, my dear, pop along and ring him up, and explain what we're trying to do, in your most dulcet and fascinating tones, then ask if you and Theodore can see him. Humph?"

"I'll try," said Laura, and went out to the telephone.

"Let me see," said the Commodore, "who's the local M.P.?"

"Major Bulfoss," Theodore replied. "Don't you remember—Laura told us about him?"

"So she did. Better leave him to me, then. And I might use that little fat man, Captain Mobbs, his agent. Well, that's that. And I'll get round among these damned aldermen and councillors and officials. But next week, Theodore, you'd better find somebody with a car who knows this part of the world—Mobbs might do—and then rope in some of the local nobs and gentry. We may be up to our neck in a social revolution, as we keep being told, but my guess is that there's still any amount of good old-fashioned snobbery about, so that it would be useful to have a few titles on our side. Make a note of it, my boy. Find out who they are and how you get to 'em. It's your job, not mine. You're young and handsome and you'll take their fancy better than another old geezer like me. Agreed?"

"I'll do my best," said Theodore, modestly. "I suppose they'll be patrons or something of that sort?"

"Something of that sort," said the Commodore, waving a hand. "I leave it entirely to you, my boy." Theodore looked puzzled. "But what are they to be patrons of?" he asked.

The Commodore stared at him. "The Farbridge Festival. Naturally."

"Yes, but what happens at the Festival?"

"I haven't the foggiest notion, Theodore. That can come later."

"Can it?"

"Well, can't it? Anyhow it must. For instance, we don't know what we can give them until we know what they will give us."

"Yes, but—we must have some idea what we're going to do." Theodore looked obstinate. "Laura made that point yesterday, and obviously she's quite right. We must have a programme of some sort——"

He stopped now because Laura returned, looking triumphant. "Mr. Jordan sounds a sweet old poppet and he's asked Theodore and me to lunch."

"Good work," cried the Commodore. "I knew you had a way with you, Laura. Keep it up."

"What's this about a programme of some sort?" she asked hastily, pink-cheeked.

"I was saying," said Theodore, "that you and I had agreed that we must have some rough idea of what ought to happen at the Festival."

"Of course we must," she cried. "I was talking about it last night to Hilda Saxon, where I live, because she's a sound festival type of the more serious sort. And we decided there must be about a week of good music in the Corn Exchange, and a really good theatrical company at the Palace, and perhaps some decent films, and Hilda says lectures——"

"Lectures!" The Commodore stared at her in horror. "Good God!"

"I know—but people like Hilda want them. I'm all for processions and fun in the parks and fireworks——"

"Fireworks certainly," cried the Commodore. "Must have fireworks. Eh, Theodore?"

Theodore, who was looking at his notebook, which bore the words "University Composition Book," merely nodded. "Exhibitions," he announced. "Pictures, perhaps, and local industries and so on. And perhaps the schools could produce a pageant."

"They can produce a dozen, for all I care," said the Commodore, "so long as I can keep well away from 'em. Druids with cotton-wool beards. Haven't seen a pageant for years, and I'd be quite happy never to see another. But you've got quite a programme there. Laura, just type a list of these attractions for us—several copies, please. Have you any of that copying stuff?"

"Carbon paper?" she said, demurely. "Yes, I remembered that. Though very soon, if we make any progress, we may need a duplicator of some sort. And I may need some help."

SHE began typing. Theodore entered more notes into his "University Composition Book." The Commodore lolled back in his armchair and smoked at the ceiling. And nothing more happened for several minutes.

Then a young man burst in. He was tallish and thin, had a blue chin and an impudent nose, and was wearing a yellow-ochre tie and an indigo shirt and a pullover in place of a waistcoat. "Well," he cried cheerfully, "what's the idea?"

The Commodore regarded him severely. "One idea, popular in my time, was to knock before entering a room uninvited."

"Have it your own way," said the young man. He went out, knocked hard, then marched in again, grinning broadly. "How's that?"

Now he noticed Laura, and it seemed to Theodore that his glance brightened at once. Tolerant though he was, Theodore found himself disliking this impudent stranger.

"The name," he announced, "is Michael Seacombe, journalist, freelance. Nothing to do with the local rag. Send stories to some of the national dailies and Sundays. Seth Hull here's a good friend of mine. He's just dropped me a

Continued on page 31

Man with a load of addresses

by DON EVERITT

With a register of millions of names, he'll post your letters to any group of people—with a few exceptions

WHEN GEORGE BERNARD SHAW was vigorously campaigning for the introduction of spelling reform a few years ago, he wanted to put his case to the Members of the Commons, the Lords, the Ulster Parliament, the Eireann Dail and Senate, and various other influential groups. He was naturally anxious to get the best possible hearing and he decided to write to them individually at their homes.

To get over the labour problem presented by the unearthing and typing of some 2,000 addresses, Shaw got in touch with a stocky, grey-haired, naturalized German named J. S. Netter, managing director of a firm which keeps an address catalogue of tens of millions of people living all over the world. With more than 4,000 classifications, the catalogue starts with abattoir managers and ends with zoo directors. It covers 100 countries from Alaska to New Zealand and contains addresses as varied as Uudenkaupungin Villatavarathedas Oy., Uusikaupunki, Finland, and Chattopadhyax Sudhirkrishna, 56 Srigopal Mallik Lane, Calcutta.

In the British section, which is the largest, it names one alcoholism specialist and 2,750,000 potential garden holders. It also includes 704 admirals, two banjoists, 2,183 bookmakers, five chewing-gum makers, 17,690 midwives, three mouseries, 2,143 pawnbrokers, nine thimble makers and 194,267 university graduates. There are even forty-three candlestick makers.

For fees varying from one guinea to several hundred pounds, the firm, British and International Addressing, mails to any selected group everything from political pamphlets to seed catalogues. Its post averages 60,000 a day.

Tapping The Richest People

In using this service Bernard Shaw was following the example of hundreds of firms and institutions. Netter's clientele is as varied as his catalogue. At one extreme there is the soap firm which circularized 11,000,000 housewives in Britain before the war; at the other is the industrial photographer who, after demobilization, wanted to build up his business again and circularized all the firms exhibiting at the British Industries Fair. Within seventy-two hours of the first batch going out, he called Netter to cancel the rest. "I've got enough work," he said, "to last me for two years."

Through British and International Addressing, a chemical firm which invented a de-rusting agent broadcast the fact to hardware importers all over the world. As a publicity stunt, an American film company had thousands of postcards sent to likely fans of a particular production. Then there was the insurance agent who offered five-figure policies to the 2,149 wealthiest people in the country. He received twenty favourable replies and on the resulting commission was able to take things easy for some considerable time.

Netter points out that his firm has helped the export trade. "Innumerable small firms which could not afford representatives abroad have developed quite useful markets through us. You know, I really believe that initially the letter from Britain can be more powerful than the salesman. Ask yourself: if you get several letters and one has a foreign stamp, which do you open first?"

Quite a lot of Netter's business is seasonal. Recently, for instance, a luxury hotel in a Devonshire holiday resort has begun circularizing London's sixty ambassadors, the 1,185 fathers of Eton boys, the wealthiest Britons, and sections of the 22,500 people living in the best flats and of the 20,344 members of the landed gentry. ("Obviously, in a case like this the classifications clash and for reasons of economy and good taste we have to sift them carefully.")

Netter (right) in the addressing room. He also has experts who can imitate clients' signatures

Another example is given by the Dutch bulb growers who send their catalogues to likely customers, particularly parks superintendents, at the beginning of winter. On one occasion four firms offered the same type of bulbs on the same day, all at different prices.

Netter has been in charge of British and International Addressing only since the end of the war. The owner of a steel plant in prewar Germany, he came to this country just before September, 1939. During the war he was in the Intelligence Service of the Ministry of Economic Warfare. The founder of his firm was a fellow countryman named F. S. Hofheimer, now head of the New York office. Hofheimer abandoned a sixty-year-old addressing business in Germany when Hitler came to power in 1933. Arriving in Britain with £5, he got some financial support and then spent five years compiling a catalogue of workable size.

Today the firm occupies a five-storey building behind Fleet Street and employs about 320 people, some of them part-time. After the addressers, the largest proportion of them are in the dispatch department. Their job has to be costed to a fine degree. Netter explains: "When a man is turning in three or four thousand envelope flaps a day a comparatively quick operation takes up a lot of time. We have to charge on a basis of moves. Take, for example, an ordinary-sized envelope and circular: picking up the circular is one move, folding it three times is three more, inserting it into an envelope is another, tucking in the flap another, and bundling, franking and mailing is the last move. For each one we charge three shillings a thousand letters. And for another fifteen shillings we have experts who sign the circulars with imitations of the client's signature."

How They Get The Names

The backroom boys of Netter's business are the twenty collators. From 2,500 telephone books, catalogues, directories and other standard reference books—all of which have to be renewed yearly—they keep the addresses and classifications up to date. Some, like the doctors and the dentists, have to be revised constantly; others, such as picture-frame makers, are revised perhaps once every six months.

Two of the collators constantly scan the newspapers. Birth and marriage announcements are filed for baby food and contraceptive manufacturers. And when an English professor was left £525,000 by an American relative his name was added to the "wealthy persons" category.

Despite the collators' efforts to live up to the firm's telegraphic name, "Evriaddress," Netter does get requests which he cannot fulfil. The other week he was asked if he could circularize all the expectant mothers in Glasgow. THE END

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Banjo with the THRILLING filling!
Banjo chocolate wafers
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STAR double edge blades

AN EVER-READY RAZOR PRODUCT 5 for 1/- EVERYWHERE

HOW RASK'S CREW WAS HAULED ASHORE

Continued from page 17

thinking of sending for Beadnell Life Saving Apparatus—we may need it later. We'll have to wait until the tide goes out before firing another rocket. We're too far away now—I think they can hold on. Meanwhile, the way for our people to keep warm is for them to work at the whips."

The inspector agreed. The coastguards and about half the hundred-odd spectators walked up and down the beach trying to free the whip. The inspector joined them. A little way out in the surf, a wave drenched him to the thighs. He took off his flying boots, flung them up the beach and continued in stockinged feet. "I shouldn't do that if I were you, sir," said Heppel, pointing to the two-inch nails projecting from the herring-boxes that littered the shore. The inspector went back to his car for some sea boots. Besides 4,000 boxes and the twelve-inch herrings they had contained, spars, hatch-covers, vegetables and fruit from the *Rask* made the rescuers' task more difficult.

Just before four in the afternoon, the fouled whip parted. The ends were hauled in and spliced. By now the tide had gone out far enough to try another rocket. Though the gale showed no signs of abating, the rain and snow had stopped. The *Rask* had swung round so that her bows were pointing directly at the shore. She had a forty-five degree list. In order to give himself a better target, Heppel set up the projector some way down the beach in knee-high surf. After two misfires, the rocket shot through the gale, passed between the masts of the wreck below the aerial and fell into the sea a few yards beyond. "It was a masterly shot—the line fell into our hands," said the chief officer, later. It was just as the rocket was fired that the Beadnell Life Saving company arrived.

Man Dragged Out To Sea

On board, the shivering survivors hauled in the line, to which was attached a make-shift whip of all the salvaged rope-gear spliced together. A lifebuoy was attached to the heavy block to keep it afloat. Helping it over the rocks with Coastguard Bill Sparks, Station Officer Bowen of Berwick, a lightly built man of fifty-seven, lost his balance. Not realizing what had happened, the volunteers continued hauling so that he was dragged out to sea. Somehow he managed to turn over on to his back. "Avast hauling there," he shouted.

At once, Sparks and two volunteers dashed into the breakers and pulled him out. His grey hair hung in rats' tails over his forehead. For a minute, it looked as though he would collapse. Then he walked up the beach and flung off his duffle coat, which, soaking wet, was now too heavy to wear. Onlookers thought he was giving up. But he returned to the whip. "Why not go home in my car?" suggested Heppel. "You've done your bit." "Like hell, sir," was the reply. "If one stodger boy can stick it, so can another." He was referring to the fact that both of them had been educated at naval training schools, he in the *Warspite* and Heppel at Greenwich.

Like most coastguards, Heppel is a naval pensioner. Born at Plymouth fifty-nine years ago, he was educated at the Royal Hospital School, Greenwich. At fifteen and a half he joined the Navy as a telegraphist. He was promoted petty officer at twenty-three and chief petty officer six years later. In the cruiser *Warrior* he helped to chase the German battle-cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* through the Mediterranean at the beginning of the first World War, and served in the battleship *Superb* at the Battle of Jutland. He also took part in the North Sea sweeps. "I've been pretty well all over the world bar China. I must be the only naval man who's never been there."

In 1932 he left the Navy after twenty-four and a half years' service. A month later he was in the Coastguard—at Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides. Three years later he was promoted station officer at Wick in the North of Scotland, and in 1940 he was posted to Kirkwall, in the Orkneys, as district officer. Since 1945 he has been district officer at Berwick.

Watch For "Poachers"

Among other duties, Heppel's men are responsible for seeing that fishing-boats are correctly marked with their name and port of registration. They maintain a monthly beach patrol to search for wrecks, corpses and fishes royal. This ensures, too, that when they are called out to a casualty, they know immediately the best way to get to it. Derelicts, mines and wrecks have to be reported to the Hydrography Department of the Admiralty for marking on the charts. Coast erosion and accretion are reported to the Ministry of Transport, which informs the Ministry of Health.

In addition, Heppel also has to report poaching trawlers to the fishery and naval authorities, inform the Navy of the movements of foreign ships, and answer inquiries about overdue civil aircraft.

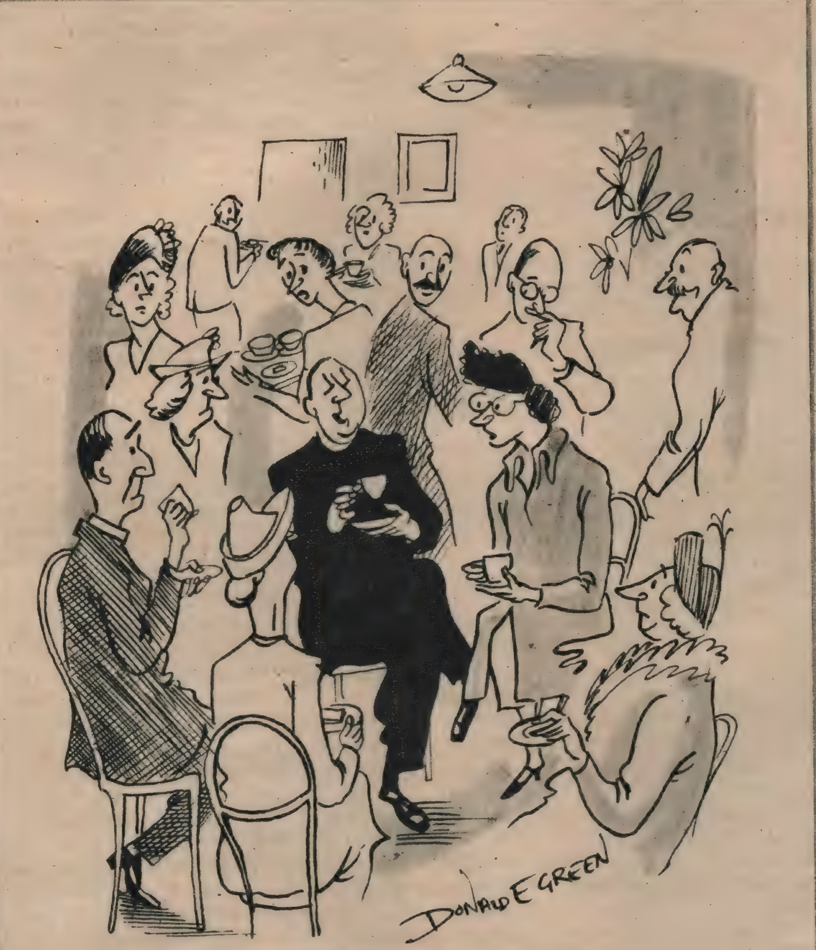
Ordinary coastguards are paid between £5 and £5 9s. a week. Station officers get thirteen shillings more. District officers receive £375 a year, rising to £435. All get free uniforms and houses free of rates and rent. For wreck service, ordinary coastguards receive extra pay up to thirty shillings "according to its nature and duration." Station officers get double this. In addition, there is a flat-rate life-prize of a pound for each person saved, divided between the coastguards and L.S.A. men taking part. L.S.A. men are also paid for wreck service, and ten shillings for each drill they attend, provided they attend at least four in the year. The other branch of the C.L.S.C., auxiliary coastguards who relieve regular coastguards under varying conditions, are paid by the hour.

When the rescue attempt was resumed after Bowen's narrow escape, the whip was hauled out to the wreck and secured on board without further incident. It was decided to send out

Judgment on lovers

THE missionary cannot countenance barbarity. The major cannot countenance interference in the tribe's affairs. The lovers must die—by stoning. This is the simple, powerful theme of Garnett Radcliffe's masterly new story, *Judgment on Lovers*—the third of five British entries in the World Story Project. Read it in

JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK



"There was a young lady from Gloucester,
I remember, in my last parish, who . . ."

a 240-yard hawser to act as an overhead ropeway for the breeches buoy. Since it was too short, the Beadnell hawser was joined on. The survivors tied their end to a stanchion on the bridge. When the coastguards hauled the line taut with a luff, the stanchion gave way. After the hawser had been made fast to the fo'c'sle, the breeches buoy was passed out. The shore end of the hawser was secured to the triangle, a nine-foot steel tripod set well out into the surf, to shorten the distance.

Five-minute Trip To Shore

Meanwhile, realizing that it was getting dark, Heppel had asked a police officer to bring up the coastguard searchlights. They were useless when they arrived; they had been placed on their sides so that the batteries had run dry. However, an onlooker lent his car batteries, and Lambert Carmichael, a Scremerston Hill farmer whose jeep had been used several times before, illuminated the beach with his headlamps.

It took five minutes to haul the second man ashore (the first had been rescued soon after ten in the morning). As he swung towards the triangle, Station Officer J. A. Scott, of Seahouses, and Coastguard Bill Sparks, of Berwick, waded into the surf to help him. The inspector stood by the triangle, where he stayed all through the rescue. The survivor was given hot tea from a mobile canteen, put on a stretcher and carried to an ambulance. From then on, ambulances and tradesmen's vans ran backwards and forwards to Berwick Infirmary.

The third man off refused help and walked to the ambulance himself. He was glad of a cigarette: "We had plenty with us but nothing to light them with." He was wearing two flags round his neck for luck. Soon after this, Bill Sparks went to the canteen for some tea. As he sat down on an upturned crate, he collapsed. He was packed off to hospital and his place at the triangle was taken by a volunteer.

The skipper, Captain George Gabrielson, came next to the last. He refused the offer of a cigarette ("too much sea") and walked unaided to the ambulance. He was fifty-seven, bald and sixteen stone. "I thought the end had come," he said in broken English. "Up on the bridge, I saw everything being smashed by the waves, and it looked impossible that we could ever get off. We could not have lasted much longer."

Last man off was the mate, dark, balding Peter Hestad. As he was hauled ashore, the rescuers could see his signal lamp bobbing through the waves. "I insisted on the skipper going first," he explained. "He is such a heavy man." It was now six o'clock. "Good show, chaps," said the inspector. "Full marks." And turning to Heppel: "I suppose this is the worst wreck you've had?" "I suppose it is," said the district officer.

Best Rescue Of The Year

By now the crowd that had been 200-strong at one period was dispersing. But the coastguards had still a lot to do. A hawser-cutter was run out, the line cut and as much of the gear as could be found was salvaged. This done, the equipment was piled on to the L.S.A. trailers and the crews returned to their various stations. Heppel reached Berwick at eight o'clock, more than eleven hours after leaving home. As he drank hot tea laced with whisky he summarized the day's work in a telegram to the Ministry of Transport: "Norwegian M.V. *Rask* ashore Scremerston. Crew fourteen and one passenger rescued by breeches buoy." Two months later the Berwick, Goswick and Beadnell L.S.A.s were jointly awarded the Coastguard Shield for the best wreck service of the year. THE END

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CB/X.4/1

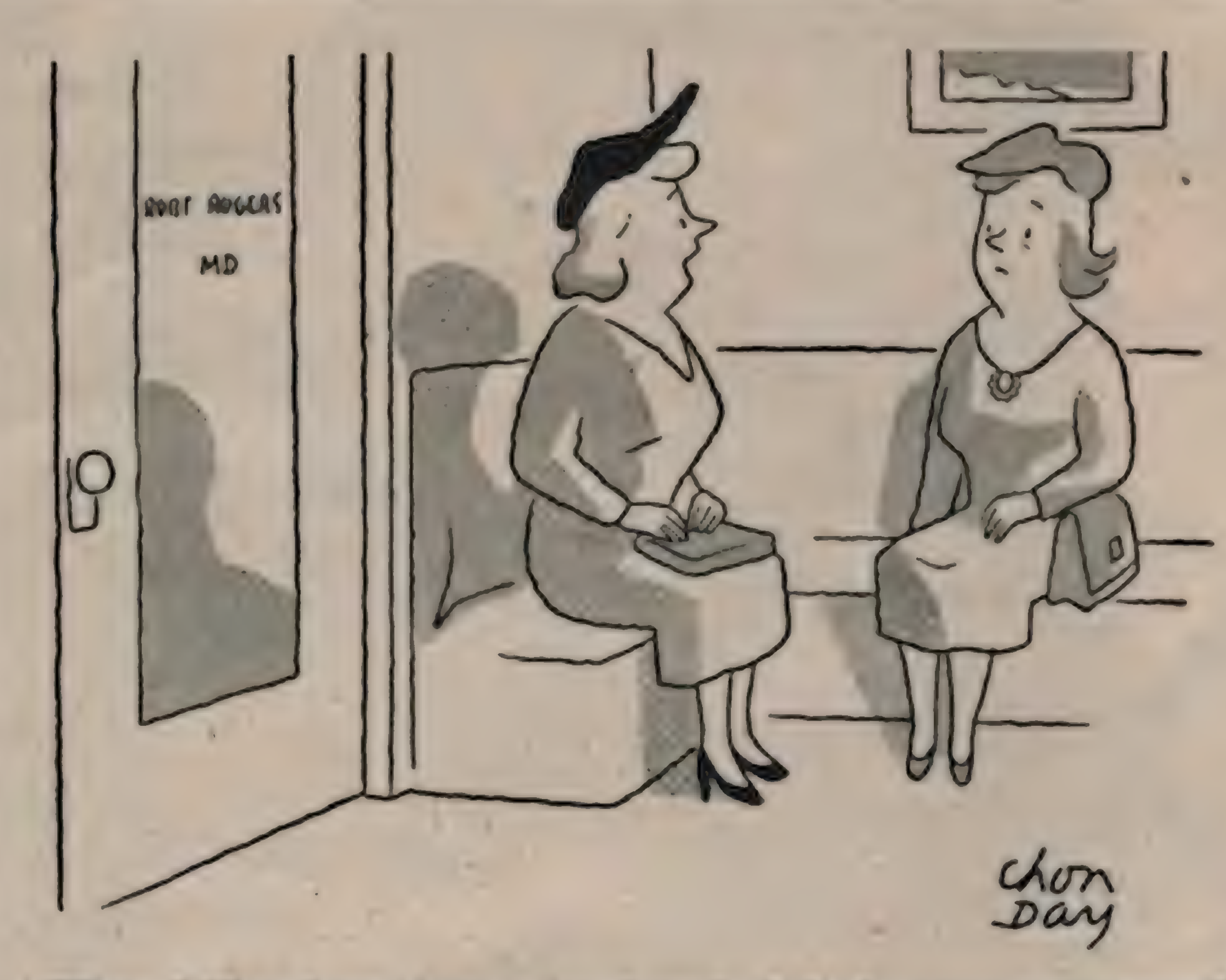
SIXTY YEARS ON

Continued from page 14

or dead, we'll find him. But I want you to realize, sir, that looking for a field marshal is just routine work, like looking for any other lost walker. I can only use the same technique. We've two hundred square miles of bad country around Blackwinter. Gulleys and potholes and bogs you could sink Nelson's Column in. And there's no way of going over that ground except by shanks's mare. It has to be covered yard by yard."

"We're not asking for the impossible, Inspector. But if it's anything less than impossible, he's got to be found." The man got up. "I'm getting back to London as quickly as possible. If there's any other point you want to raise, get me on the phone."

He shook hands smartly, and the inspector accompanied him to the door.



"What I like about him is he doesn't belittle your symptoms"

COMING back to the office, he sat frowning and doodling on the blotter. Holtrigg had a certain local pride in Urmestone, though it was all of twenty years since his last visit. Urmestone was a big man all right. . . . Had a string of letters after his name, the sort you don't acquire even at a university. Letters like O.M. and C.H. Flew his own plane. Been lost for weeks in Arabia and turned up with a moral victory in his pocket that had cost the Axis the equivalent of ten divisions.

He called in Sergeant Strake and Constable Bradley.

"Just another cocky hiker," he told them, "but he happens to be related to the Archbishop of Bangalore and they want action. Aged sixty-five plus. Active, wiry build. Last seen at King's Cross. Took a ticket for Kenwick, but may have dropped off short. Wearing faded green tweeds, well-worn raincoat, cloth hat. Probably lost his memory. Usual routine, Sergeant. See if they can loan us a couple of men from Grassingford. Then pull in as many of the local lads as you can. Same old bait . . . no pay, but think of suffering humanity."

There was one angle Bracegirdle wanted to cover himself, and before he went home to supper he covered it. He drove down to the training college, that moated, battlemented place in which, till the recent lean years, all the Urmestones since Agincourt had been born. He satisfied himself by discreet inquiries that no stranger had been seen in the house or the grounds. There was a chance, he had imagined, that a man with amnesia might return to the scenes of his childhood.

By the time he returned, Constable Bradley had found — or "elicited the information," as he put it — that a man who might be their quarry had alighted that morning from a local train and made towards Blackwinter. Opinions differed as to the way he was dressed. One witness said he was carrying a rucksack. If so, it seemed improbable that he was the missing field marshal. Still, the rumour would have to be investigated.

After being assured by Sergeant Strake that all arrangements for tomorrow's search were well in hand, Inspector Bracegirdle went to bed. His informant probably thought he would be up on the tops now, swinging a storm lantern. Thinking that, he smiled sourly to himself. The atom had been cracked and men talked merrily of flying to Mars. Nevertheless, it was still impossible to search the Blackwinter moors by the last sliver of a waning moon.

Early next morning, three search-parties were converging on the Penley heights: one from Grassingford, another from Blackwinter, a third, under Bracegirdle's personal direction, from Holtrigg.

His two boys, Christopher and Malcolm, were with him. At twelve and ten, they were already veterans of the moor, and the inspector assigned them to their own stretch and left them to it. When they were older and had to do this sort of thing for a living, he told them sardonically, they wouldn't think it was such good fun.

They beat the moors all morning, taking the cloughs and gullies first, then fanning out over the high plateau. By noon they had had no luck, and the men's spirits went down perceptibly. Bracegirdle knew from previous experience that the going always seemed worse in the afternoon. Fatigue, fear of failure, and the slow approach of darkness begin to tell.

And there was another development to disturb him. Coming over Grindle, he spotted a man who wasn't one of his party, a man whose sharp-eyed interest and unobtrusive camera said "Press" as plainly as a label round his neck. He followed the inspector and finally cornered him at Grindle Bridge.

"Nice way to spend Saturday afternoon," the fellow said genially.

"What of it?" retorted the inspector. "You don't work a five-day week any more than we do."

"It wouldn't be Urmestone you're looking for?"

BRACEGIRDLE did some quick thinking. This wasn't a man from one of the local papers. He knew them all. So if there'd been a leak, it was from the top.

"It might be the Grand Lama," he said, "but as far as I'm concerned we're looking for a man named Smith."

The newspaper man's smile said a lot, and Bracegirdle felt uneasy. He found himself wondering if there might be more to the Urmestone affair than he had been led to believe. He called off his men in face of darkness and a warning flurry of snow.

It was a grim-eyed inspector who stalked down the moor, retrieved his car, and drove back with the two tired boys. A responsibility like this didn't usually come his way, and he wasn't caring much for it.

After a meal, he took out his car again and visited Grassingford railway station, checking statements and trying to decide whether yesterday's untraced traveller was their man or not. As usual, there were as many versions of the incident as people recounting them.

But his suspicions about a high-level leak were confirmed. While he was there, the Thames—Clyde pulled in, and through the window he saw a discarded London evening paper lying on one of the seats. He went in and claimed it.

Newspapers, he reflected, can tell a lot without seeming to. On the second page there was an account of the Blackwinter search, headed: Missing Man Moorland Victim? And just beneath it was the bald statement that Sir Stuart Urmestone, head of the military mission now on its way to an unspecified destination, had not travelled with his colleagues.

"When asked to confirm a rumour that the field marshal had travelled north, incognito, on Thursday evening or Friday morning, a War Office spokesman said that he had no further statement to make."

Bracegirdle drove thoughtfully back from the station. It wasn't his funeral. Nothing had leaked through him. All he had to do was carry out instructions and keep on looking.

"Everybody out at seven in the morning," he told Bradley when he returned.

"You'd better break the news to 'em yourself, sir," Bradley replied. "These farmers have a queer idea they're in the business to make a living, and that if anybody gets lost up here it's his own ruddy fault for coming."

"Then get somebody else," said Bracegirdle irritably. "Meet the early trains. There'll be a pack of hikers whatever the weather's like, and the breed that comes up this time of the year can take it."

"It'll mean a later start, sir."

"Can't help that."

He was up at six himself. As he was crossing the road from his own house, he met Sergeant Strake, who said that a farmer named Snaithing, from Blackwinter way, had come in to see him.

"Maybe it's nothing," said Snaithing, when Bracegirdle had greeted him, "but there was a fire up on Penley Fell last night. I could see it from our bedroom windows."

The inspector looked at him doubtfully, then opened a drawer and took out a pair of glasses. He walked with Snaithing to the foot of Market Street. Seen from there, the great mass of Penley rose like a hog's back from the surrounding hills and tumbled in a sheer precipice to the north. The lower slopes were clear in the morning air, but mist showed only the faint outline of its 2,500-foot summit. He focused the glasses, shook his head and disgustedly lowered them.

"Now who could have been up there last night?" he muttered. In the valley pubs, the men who had camped on Penley were known by name, and venerated. "And how the devil could he light a fire?"

"Nothing up there but a bit of scrub," Snaithing said. "Unless he found a bit of rotten fencing from the low side—that might burn."

Bracegirdle walked quickly to his garage. "Like to come?" he asked Snaithing, and the farmer jumped into the car. The inspector honked viciously and his two boys came running out.

They left the Blackwinter road at Grindle and climbed a heartbreaking track till they were only a couple of miles from Penley and a thousand feet below. There they piled out of the car and began the scramble to the top.

There were drifts of frozen snow among the rocks. The wind streamed bitterly up the mountainside, filling their eyes with tears. And when at last they pulled themselves over the ultimate lip of rock to the summit, the gale was like a solid wall to lean against. Bracegirdle scrambled up the cairn and looked round. Those few hundred square yards were empty of all humanity but themselves.

"Sure you weren't dreaming?" he shouted.

"Dreaming be damned!" Snaithing shouted back. He pointed. "Look, what's yon?"

THEY crossed the scoured rock. In a sheltered hollow lay a pile of charred wood. When Bracegirdle bent down, the embers were still warm under his fingers. Then Christopher, who had been investigating nearby, came to his father with a long, skewer-like piece of metal.

"Tent-peg," he said.

Bracegirdle went with him to the spot where he had found it.

"Look," the boy went on, "you can see where he pushed the pegs into the crevices."

They stood and looked at each other, blanched with cold.

"And he slept up here last night," Bracegirdle said.

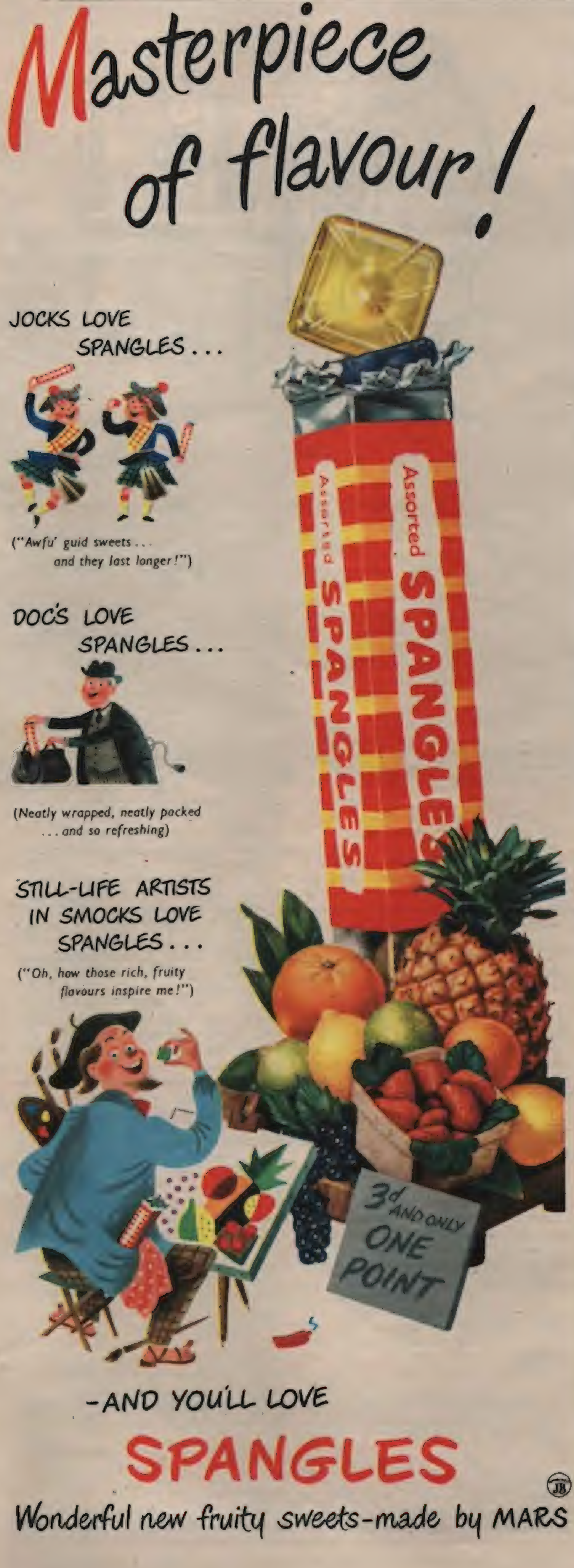
He was thinking that whether it was Urmestone, or the unidentified walker who had vanished after leaving Grassingford Station, the man they were after must be mad.

But his madness gave them something to work on. Bracegirdle worked on it all day, basing his strategy on the probability that their quarry could not have been more than a mile distant when they reached his abandoned camp on Penley.

His search-parties had been strengthened by a dozen hardy walkers, who had done this sort of thing before and were willing to obey orders. By four o'clock, with two hours of daylight left, word came from the party on Grindle Downfall that a man wearing green tweeds and carrying a rucksack had been seen a mile away on the slopes, making towards the jagged clough that drains the Blackwinter bog waters into the Holt River.

Bracegirdle whipped up his reinforcements and led them towards the clough. The gritstone edges were sheathed with ice; a thin snow was falling and the cold was intense.

Once, he saw the man through his



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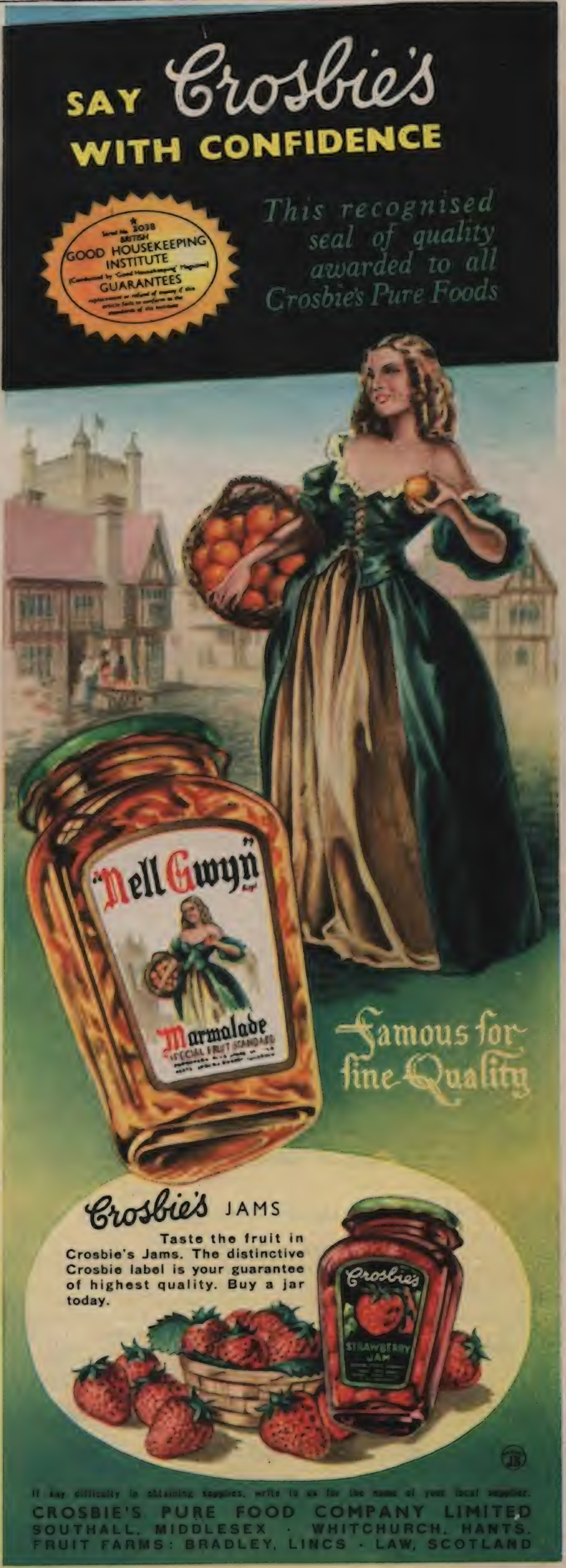

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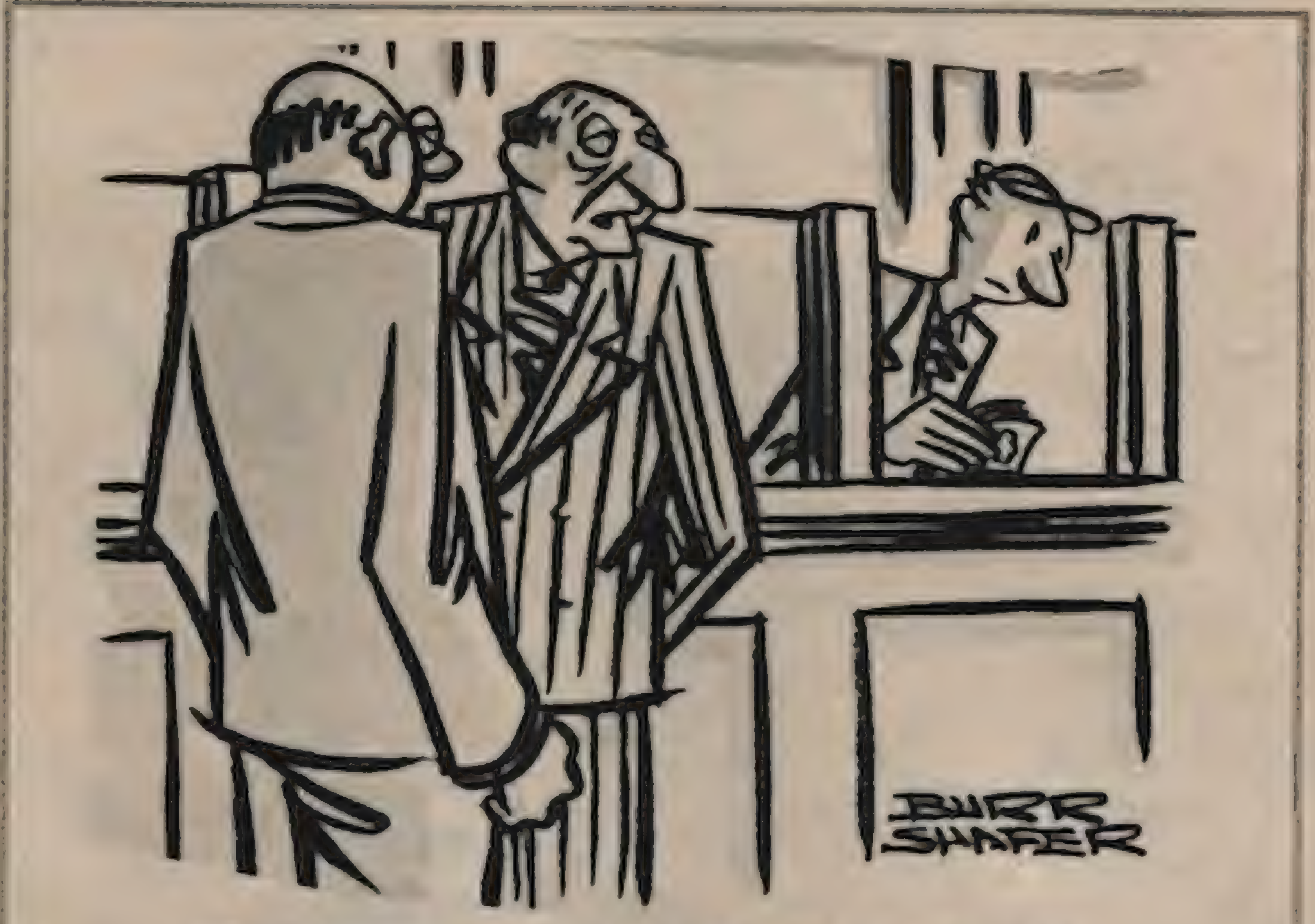

"Get the auditor to check Putney's books. We know he can't live on the salary we pay him"

glasses, but he was still a long way off. And the sky was taking on an ever-darker grey. The inspector's hopes began to fade again. Finally, one of his conscripts, a sixteen-year-old tramper who had come on the morning train, took a header down the clough into the frozen stream, and Bracegirdle had to treat him for lacerations and a twisted ankle before sending him to Holtrigg Hospital.

It was the end of the second day. He looked grimly at his silent, beaten helpers.

"The man we're after," he said, "lit a fire on Penley last night. He'll probably light another somewhere else tonight. Any volunteers to watch from the tops?"

Half a dozen hands went up.

"Good! Fix it up among yourselves. If you see anything, take a bearing and let me know. And for God's sake be careful. We don't want any more accidents. And let me tell you I appreciate what you've done. If any of you ever get pulled in for trespass, I'll put in a word for you. Thanks, boys."

There was a ragged laugh, and Bracegirdle walked away heavily down the clough.

AFTER a hot meal, he went to the police station and pulled the phone across the desk. He wasn't looking forward to telling his distinguished informant that two days' work had added up to nothing. But as he was calling the exchange, Sergeant Strake announced that the saloon was at the door again and the V.I.P. was unfolding his legs.

Bracegirdle waited without much enthusiasm. He supposed he was due for the carpet. But when the V.I.P. came in, his manner was very different from what it had been on Friday evening. Of anyone less exalted, the inspector would have thought he was embarrassed.

"Just trying to get through to you," Bracegirdle said. "Sorry, sir, but we've had no luck so far."

"Glad I've spared you the trouble."

He sat down, warmed his hands, and, probably to give an impression of being human like the rest, lit his pipe. Then he stared at the top of Bracegirdle's head and came to the point.

"I'm afraid you're going to be very annoyed, Inspector, when you hear what I've got to say. I mentioned a security curtain, didn't I? . . . Well, I'm afraid we took the liberty of using you, without your knowledge, as part of that curtain."

Bracegirdle felt the blood drumming in his ears, but waited with a show of respect.

"What I told you about Urmestone's military mission was strictly correct. What I didn't tell you, Inspector, is that certain people were anxious to prevent his departure. He should have left on Friday. But the steering of his car had been tampered with, and when we ordered a last-minute examination of the plane, we found a tin full of gelignite in the tail-compartment."

"I see," Bracegirdle said.

"So we told Urmestone to lie low at home till we gave him the green light. Then we staged this search over your local hills. It was a double bluff. The Press were anonymously tipped off that he was up here, though we'd impressed secrecy upon you and your men. It was all over the country that Urmestone was in the Holtrigg district with a lost memory. The plan was, you see, that while attention was focused on this district, he should be quietly flown to his destination from some little-used airfield in the London area."

"Good staff work," Bracegirdle said through tight lips. "Except that I've wasted two days, sir, pulled in half the local population on a wild-goose chase and got one of my helpers in the cottage hospital, I've no fault to find with it."

The V.I.P. coughed and looked uncomfortable. "I don't blame you for feeling sore, Inspector. But I've not finished yet. Urmestone should have been at the airfield at three this afternoon. He wasn't. But *this* came from his secretary. He'd found it propped on Urmestone's desk."

He passed a torn sheet of paper to the inspector. Bracegirdle read it.

I'm clearing out for a day or two. They've given out that I'm up north with a lost memory. It's a damn good idea. I'm going to lose it and go. Haven't had a break since I was forty.

The inspector pushed the note back. "So the phoney search becomes a real one?" he said.

"I'm afraid so. And that means we shall have to take charge from now on."

Bracegirdle looked up sharply. "I understand. I'm good enough for the dummy, but not for the real thing?"

"Don't take offence, Inspector. We appreciate what you've done with

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F.49

Tired Telephonist becomes a 'regular' live wire

MAVE'S a switchboard girl. The one number that never seems to get engaged. "Hello, hello . . . HELLO," I said. "Had any gentleman callers?"

"*Never a one,*" *mourned Mave.* "*I've been cut off. But you can't expect me to keep my golden voice untarnished with all this constipation I get.*"

"S-s-sorry you're being t-r-r-roubled," I said.

"*Oh pipe down, do,*" *groaned Mave.*

"Talking of pipes . . ." I said.

"*Who is?*" *said Mave icily.*

"I am," I said. "About the 30 feet of piping you carry around inside you, which everything you eat has to negotiate. Your intestinal muscles are supposed to pull it through—but they've nothing to take hold of if you eat a lot of starchy food."

"*What's that to me?*" *asked Mave.*

"No answer when you dial T.U.M.," I said, "and a bad line in constipation. What you need is more bulk on your daily menu—in fact, you need All-Bran."

"*The breakfast food?*" *enquired Mave.*

"The same," I said—"and one of the best bulk foods the doctors know. All-Bran gives those lazy muscles something to pull on—it'll make you 'regular' in a few days."

"*I'll call you when it does,*" *said Mave sceptically.*

So, four days later, ring telephone ring, and it's Mave again, sounding as if she'd been elected Miss Long Distance 1951.

"*Bless you,*" *she sang.* "*All-Bran* did *make me 'regular'—I feel like a new girl.*"

"You're through," I said.

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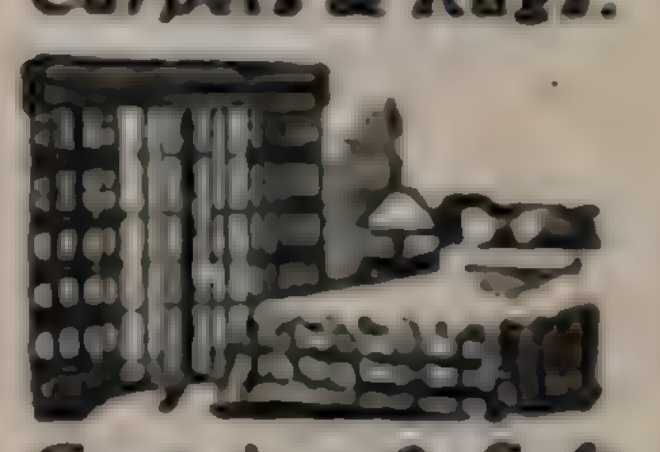

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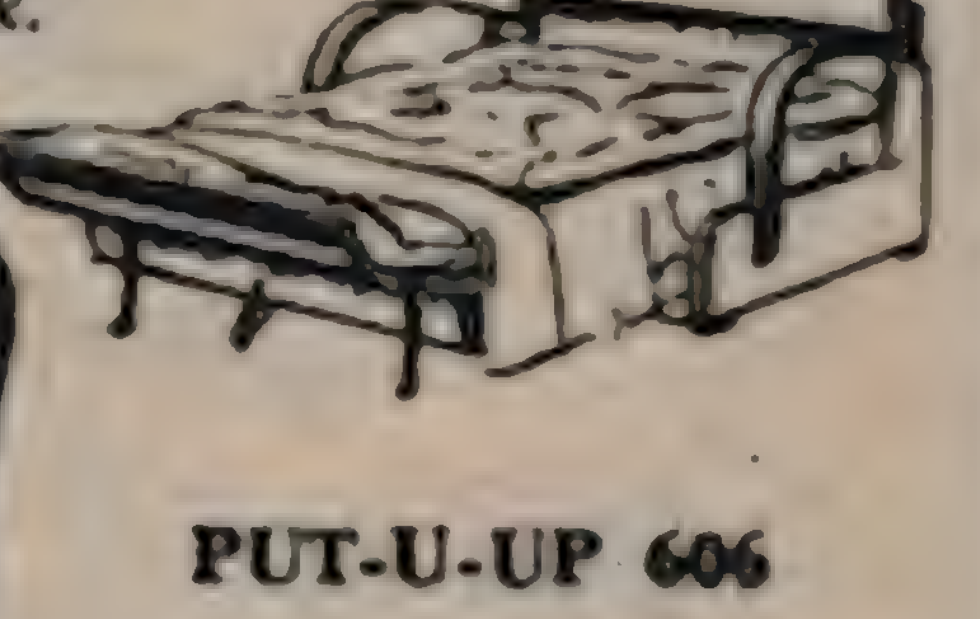

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your limited facilities. But something's obviously happened to Urmestone or he'd have been back this afternoon. Tomorrow morning I've a helicopter coming, and we're going to use walkie-talkie. . . :"

"I shall enjoy watching you," Bracegirdle said bitterly.

The V.I.P. seemed anxious to get away. "If you can recommend a good hotel?" he said, getting up.

"You could try the Falcon," suggested Bracegirdle.

For five minutes after the V.I.P. had gone, he sat very still. Then he allowed himself a session of quiet, passionless cursing.

When he reached home, his wife and the two boys had gone to bed. Supper had been left for him on the table. As he was pouring his cocoa, a smart rap came on the door. When he opened it, a wirily built man confronted him. He was dressed in a green tweed suit under an old raincoat, and carried a heavy rucksack.

"Bracegirdle?" he barked, parade-ground fashion. "They told me at the police station I'd find you here."

BRACEGIRDLE shut the door behind his caller and stood silently while he slid off the rucksack.

"Urmestone's the name, Inspector. Born not far from here. Got a spare room or space on the floor to spread a blanket? Wouldn't ask, but I don't want the whole town to know my business. Knew your father, if that's any introduction."

"Perhaps you'd like a drink and something to eat," Bracegirdle suggested. "I'm just having supper."

"Good of you. Anything you've got. . . . Bread and cheese? Nothing better!"

"I daresay we can fix you up with a room as well. But I'd like to know, sir," added Bracegirdle with a touch of malice, "why a humble policeman is honoured with a midnight visit like this?"

"Tell you afterwards. I'm damned hungry. Ran out of food this afternoon."

Bracegirdle munched frugally while Urmestone demolished half a loaf, a week's cheese ration, and most of a jar of pickled onions.

"Now!", he said, sticking out short, sturdy legs to the fire, and smiling at Bracegirdle. "I've been taking my first holiday for twenty years. Did a thing last night I've wanted to do ever since I was a boy. Camped on Penley! And I'm sixty-eight, let me tell you! Sixty-eight!"

"Did you happen to notice anyone else up on the tops today, sir?" Bracegirdle asked mildly.

"Crowds of 'em. Devil of a job keeping from under everybody's feet. Didn't want to be shaking hands and signing autograph-books all day."

"No, sir. I can understand that. But they weren't after your autograph. I think I'd better let you have my end of the story before we go any further."

And he told him. When he had finished, Urmestone roared with laughter. "You know," he said, "the trouble is they're too damned clever. They gave me the idea themselves, didn't they? Did they think I was going to skulk at home just because a couple of thugs try to blow me up? Gone up north, they said. So I did. Wouldn't you have done?"

"Very probably, sir. I often feel like slipping the leash myself."

"Mind, I intended showing up on time this afternoon. But it's a tougher walk over Blackwinter than it used to be when I was a lad. Getting old, that's it."

"I wouldn't say that, sir. I think you've done very well. And now, I'd better ring up the Falcon and tell your guardian angel that you're safe and sound."

"Let him flap his wings a bit longer," Urmestone said callously. "It's thirty years since I started making the world safe for democracy. I'm due for a rest."

He threw his tobacco-pouch across the hearth. "Snug little place you've got," he said, looking round the kitchen.

"I like it, sir."

Urmestone was peering at two brown objects on the dresser. They were horse-chestnuts, pierced and threaded with stout string.

"Conkers!" he said. "Got a lad, eh?"

"Two." The inspector absently picked up one of the chestnuts. "They put in some good work looking for you, sir."

"Haven't played conkers for—oh, getting on for sixty years!" Urmestone picked up the second chestnut and swung it at the cream-jug. "D'you know when it was? The morning I went off to prep. school. Remember it as if it were only yesterday. I was conker-bashing with your father, Inspector, down by the old lodge, when they fetched me in to go to the station. Never finished the game and I never saw him again. Seems a long time since. Poor old Tommy Bracegirdle! Still on the go, I suppose?"

"He died ten years ago, sir," said Bracegirdle laconically.

"Did he? My age, too. . . . Poor old Tommy! Grew to be a man, fathered a future police inspector, and I never saw him again after that morning. Sixty years on!" He sighed deeply, swung the chestnut again, and took a tentative swipe at the one Bracegirdle was holding.

"Bet I could split it," he said.

A smile passed across Bracegirdle's face, a smile half of embarrassment.

"Bet you a signed volume of my autobiography to a ten-bob note," Urmestone said.

"I'll take you!" Bracegirdle said, and shortened his grip on the string.

That is why Inspector Bracegirdle, terror of Blackwinter's fowl-thieves, poachers and trespassers, rarely mentions that queer affair. He wouldn't mind admitting the way the V.I.P. made a fool of him. But he's sensitive about the way he played conkers in his kitchen at midnight with Field Marshal Sir Stuart Malverson Urmestone, O.M., C.H., K.C.V.O.

THE END

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Three enemies

WE have three great enemies to fight—laziness, fear and pride. Laziness stops us thinking. Fear prevents us facing the truth. Pride makes us unwilling to admit that we are ever wrong.

Anyone who fails to conquer these foes leads a petty life. He may be contented after a fashion, but it's the contentment of a fossil. If you don't grow, you petrify. If you don't move forward, you sag back. That's as inevitable as the law of gravity.

by ROFFE THOMPSON

FESTIVAL AT FARBRIDGE

Continued from page 22

hint about you people. Like to introduce yourselves?''

"Miss Laura Casey, our secretary,'' said the Commodore. "Mr. Theodore Jenks, my assistant. And I'm Commodore Tribe.''

"Hallo, hallo, hallo,'' cried Seacombe. "And now—going back to the beginning—what's the idea?''

"Well,'' the Commodore began.

But Theodore stopped him. "I'm sorry, Commodore. But do we want, at this stage, to say anything to Mr. Seacombe?''

"Theodore,'' cried Laura, "don't be stuffy.''

"I beg your pardon,'' said Theodore, stiffly. And found himself, for the first time for years, wanting to sulk.

Seacombe gave them a quizzical look. "Now I'll tell you something about the Press. It's simple but a lot of people—even experienced public men—never grasp it. I don't say it always works—there are stinkers in every profession—but forty-nine times out of fifty it does. Confide in us, be frank with us, bring us on your side, and, apart from a few stinkers, we'll print what you want us to print and ignore the rest. But be cagey, try to keep us out, tell us to pop off, be grand and haughty with us, and you're sunk. For instance, there's a juicy little story going round about our Member here, and it would be worth quite a few pennies to me in the right quarter. But two nights ago, little Mobbs, the Tory agent, spilt the beans over a few Scotches, and I agreed not to touch it. That's how it works, good people—begging yours, Miss Casey,'' he concluded drolly.

"Granted as soon as asked,'' said Laura, in the same style.

"So now—who talks?'' said Seacombe, looking from Laura to the Commodore.

The Commodore explained their plan, adding that he had the Mayor's promise to reopen the question of a Farbridge Festival if it could be proved there was a strong public demand for one. "And now we're busy getting in touch with various people,'' he said.

"You must count me in on this,'' said Seacombe. "It's not a bad little story as it stands now, but I'll leave it for a few days. With any luck, you ought to provide me with plenty of good stories soon, so I'll do what I can to help. When you've got a few useful people on your side, you ought to organize a public meeting.''

The Commodore said he had thought of that.

"Early next week,'' Seacombe continued, briskly, "the B.B.C. is running its *Next Question Please* programme from the Corn Exchange here. Only a few questions are chosen, of course, but you want to make sure that one of them is 'Should Farbridge have a festival?' and I think I can help you to fix that one. They're sure to say Yes, and if there's plenty of applause—and B.B.C. audiences applaud anything—it'll make rattling good publicity.''

"Make a note of it, Laura,'' cried the Commodore, delighted.

"And when you really get cracking, you'll need a good publicity man,'' said Seacombe. "And that's me. I accept your offer.''

"We haven't made one yet,'' said Theodore.

Seacombe looked at him, lifting one eyebrow quizzically. "Correct me if I'm wrong, but I have an idea you don't like me very much.''

"Hallo, Freddy—oh, sorry, thought you were Freddy"

Theodore gave him a long look, but said nothing.

"Theodore!'' cried Laura, reproachfully.

"We're striking the wrong note,'' said the Commodore, hoisting himself out of his chair. "I'll take Mr. Seacombe below. We might have a word or two with our friend Seth. Just exchange notes,'' and he looked from Laura to Theodore, twinkling away, "and prepare yourselves for lunching with Jordan.''

"Be seeing you, Miss Casey,'' cried Seacombe, as they went out.

For the next five minutes Laura typed away with marked severity, a model for any school of stenographers.

Theodore, behind the other table, stared intently at his "University Composition Book" as though some urgent message, originally written in invisible ink, might now be deciphered in its pages. The room began to take on again its forlorn look.

"He said half-past twelve,'' said Laura, at the end of these five gigantic minutes.

"Who did?'' Theodore inquired, politely.

"Old Mr. Jordan, of course. Or have you forgotten we're supposed to lunch with him?''

"That's very early, isn't it?''

She looked hard at the pickled cabbage on the wall just above his head. "I don't suppose it's really necessary we should both go.''

"If you'd prefer to go alone,'' he began, heavily.

"I think this is very silly.''

"I'm sorry.'' And then wondered what he was sorry about.

"So you ought to be, Theodore,'' she said, warmly. "I thought you were very rude to that Seacombe man, who might be very useful to us. I never imagined you could be so unpleasant to anybody.''

He gave this some thought. "I didn't mean to be. The fact is, I don't think I like journalists. Can't stand that cheeky know-all manner they cultivate.''

"It's nothing.''

"Barging in like that! Annoyed me. However, I'll try to do better next time, if there has to be a next time.'' Every word weighed about a ton.

She ignored them all. "As I don't quite understand where the house is, we'd better start off about twelve.'' She put another sheet into her machine, although she had no idea what to type on it. Then, her heart banging away, she looked up to see him towering above her table, a humble, bewildered giant, too humble, too easily bewildered. He plucked her hand from the side of the typewriter, as if it were a flower, held it a moment, then gently put it down on the table.

"I feel this room can't hold us both just now,'' he said, slowly and softly, the vast adorable idiot. "I'll meet you downstairs at twelve.''

As soon as he had closed the door behind him, she threw at it the Emgee Type Eraser Made in England, and felt much better.

Old Mr. Jordan's house was a dingy villa that had a semicircular drive and some neglected laurels and rhododendrons. It looked like a house in one of our more sombre detective stories; its owner ought to have been lying not far from one of the bay windows, with an Oriental paper-knife buried in his cold breast. But, in fact, Mr. Jordan, who answered the door himself, was very much alive. He was a stringy, brownish old man with a big nose and a thin beard, and might almost have been an Arab chieftain. He was wearing carpet slippers, stained flannel trousers, a brown cardigan above a grey cardigan, a faded plaid shirt and no tie. Shabby and messy but very clean. He had a high, staccato voice.

"Come in, come in,'' he cried. "Nice young people, I should think. Good eyes. I'm very untidy here. Old man. Can't be bothered.''

The hall was like part of a second-hand shop. There was only just room to pass between odd pieces of furniture and piles of books. But the dining-room, into which he led the way immediately, was very bare. There were no pictures on the walls, and only the necessary minimum of furniture. On the table, which had been roughly laid for three, were a jug of some pale yellow liquid, a wholewheat loaf, and an enormous wooden bowl.

"Lunch,'' said Mr. Jordan, pointing. "Salad—made it myself. Good bread. Mead. All I have. All you'll get.''

"It sounds very nice,'' said Laura. "And I've never had mead. It's mixed up in my mind with Anglo-Saxons.''

"We're mixed up with Anglo-Saxons,'' said Mr. Jordan. "But this young man's got some exotic strain in him. Inquire later.'' These remarks were made in exactly the same tone in which he had replied to Laura, but obviously they were not addressed to her and were really a thinking aloud. "This mead's young. Not very strong. Do you good. Pretty child, but probably doesn't eat properly. Sit down, sit down, sit down.''

He dumped great helpings of his salad on to their plates. It consisted of lettuce, tomatoes, grated carrot, potatoes, beetroot, spring onions, dates and hard-boiled eggs. The wholewheat bread, cut in thick slices, was delicious. The mead tasted like a sweetish wine, and seemed to Laura, who had had great hopes of it, rather disappointing.

"Don't mind me,'' said Mr. Jordan. "I'm seventy-five. For fifty years I was a shopkeeper. Had to please everybody. Did well. You know the place, eh?''

The young people nodded. "It's a very good shop,'' said Laura. "The best in Farbridge.''

"Never go near it now,'' said Mr. Jordan. "Had to please everybody for fifty years. When I retired, I decided I'd done enough, so now I just please myself. Don't care a rap. One advantage of being old—you don't care. Not if you've any sense. In love with him?''

"What? Oh—no——'' stammered Laura, scarlet.

"None of my business.'' He looked at Theodore. "Not a Communist?''

"No, I'm not,'' Theodore replied, firmly. "In fact, I don't like Communists.''

"High Tory, perhaps?''

"No, not at all,'' said Theodore.

"Most young men seem to go to one extreme or the other,'' said Mr. Jordan. "I've a grandson—up at Oxford—talks and behaves as if he were the last of some ancient family—blue blood, Crusades, mouldering castles. Keep telling him he's the grandson of a shopkeeper who made a little money. No need to give himself airs. Young donkey. Probably don't like this salad.''

"Yes, I do,'' said Laura, who did.

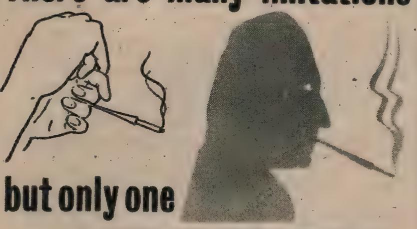
"To much lemon juice in the dressing. Radical Liberal myself. Empirical, pragmatic. Too much theory in politics. All wrong. If it works, keep on with it. If it doesn't, try something else. Politics is a sort of housekeeping and shopkeeping. Too much solemn bunkum about it. The Honourable and Gallant Member for Farbridge! Fiddle-de-dee! Like undergraduates. My grandson talks like that—heard him once at the Union. This young man seems rather a solemn fellow.''

"He's not really,'' said Laura, to Theodore's confusion. "But we had rather a stupid little quarrel this morning, and he hasn't quite got over it. But can we talk to you about the Farbridge Festival, please, Mr. Jordan?''

"Sensible girl. Certainly. Remember what you said on the telephone—I've an excellent memory, though probably I don't look as if I had—but just enlarge on it.''

So Laura explained what the three of them were trying to do and what little had already been done. Much to her relief, for she had expected him to be chiming in all the time, Mr. Jordan listened attentively and did not interrupt her once.

"I'll do what I can,'' he said. "Might even add something to the council grant, if they give you one. Not a penny if they don't. Don't propose to waste money. Might help you with them, though, if they knew I'd supplement their grant. Might be ready to give thirty-five pounds for every hundred they give you, but don't tell them that. Coverack—he's the Borough Treasurer—would sit up all night working out how much he could cut down the grant on that basis. Honest, industrious man, Coverack, but too fond of power



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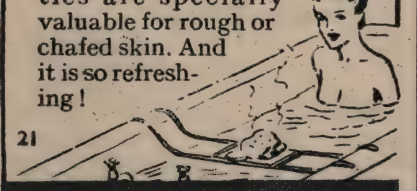

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because he doesn't enjoy life. You probably think I don't enjoy life, but I do. One reason why I want a festival. Give people a jerk—start them enjoying life. Need something. Too worried, most of them. Or half asleep. Most of these girls in shops now are half asleep."

"Yes, they are," said Laura. "I've noticed that. They haven't any interest in serving you, so they're making it drearier and drearier for themselves. Is that politics? Some people seem to think it is."

"I don't think it is," said Theodore.

"Of course it isn't," cried Mr. Jordan. "Psychological. Drift of the times. Finished? Had enough? Then I'll make some tea."

"Couldn't we wash up?" Laura asked.

"Yes," he replied, promptly. "Kitchen at the end of the hall. I'll be there."

When he had gone and they began to clear the table, Laura said: "He *is* eccentric, isn't he? But I like him. Don't you?"

"Yes," said Theodore. "In the East many old men, after they have been in business for years and brought up families, go off to live simply by themselves, in the jungle or in a cave in the mountains. I think that is what Mr. Jordan has done. This house is now his cave in the mountains."

Mr. Jordan not only brought in the tea but also a visitor, who was a warm, reddish sort of woman, about forty-five, with a quick eye and a large, determined mouth. "Mrs. Coote," he announced. "Chairman of our Education Committee. Told her about you. Very helpful woman. Likes her own way, of course."

"I've been wanting to meet you," said Laura. "Hilda Saxon's friend, Helen Weeks, said you'd want to help us."

"She's quite right," said Mrs. Coote. "Tell me what you propose to do, while I drink this delicious tea."

WITH some assistance from Theodore, Laura sketched a possible programme for the Festival.

"That's more or less what we had in mind originally," said Mrs. Coote. "Have you any idea what it'll cost? Or haven't you worked that out?"

"It's very difficult to work it out," said Theodore. "It seems to me to depend on the scale of the thing, and also on what people are ready to do to help it out. For instance, if we have to pay a heavy rent for a concert hall or a theatre, then the drama or music part of it will cost more. I think we need a little more time. I'd like to try to work out some figures with the Commodore."

"And I'd better meet this Commodore," said Mrs. Coote, briskly. "I don't really understand what a Commodore's doing trying to organize a festival here. Or even quite where you two come in."

"Nice woman really," cried Mr. Jordan. "Don't mind her. Overdoes this official businesslike manner. Women always do, once they've got the hang of it. Tell her you're doing it for fun. If she doesn't like that, let her lump it."

"In my case that would be quite true," said Theodore, firmly. "And if somebody here tells me to mind my own business, I don't know what my answer would be."

"And I'll bet somebody will," said Laura, darkly.

"Probably several people will," said Mrs. Coote, smiling. "Nevertheless, you might succeed where we failed, just because we were all very busy people and not one of us could make the Festival a special target."

NOW YOU KNOW

THE object of breaking in a new pipe is to get a thin, even lining of carbon inside the bowl. This protects the wood and gives a cool smoke.

Half-fill the pipe with tobacco, loosely packed. Then smoke *slowly and gently* down to the last shred. Next time add more tobacco till finally you are smoking a full pipe.

A dodge to speed up carbonization is to smear the bowl first with a *little* syrup on the fingertip. Soaking the bowl in whisky is not advised. One general tip: never recharge a hot pipe—it spoils the flavour of the tobacco.

"Not target. Let's have no targets." Mr. Jordan shook his head in disgust. "Everybody talks about targets now. Reaching targets. Passing targets. Idiotic jargon."

"Shut up," said Mrs. Coote, amiably. "They know what I mean. You'll certainly have it thrown at you, probably by the wretched *Weekly Record*, that you're not Farbridge people and ought to go away and mind your own business. You must be prepared for that—and even worse things than that. But I have a meeting of the Education Committee this afternoon, and I'll tell them what's happening. The director, Mr. Huntley, will be on our side, and although he's not a very forceful character, he's very useful. What's this man going to do for you?" And she indicated Mr. Jordan.

"Never mind about that," said Mr. Jordan, before Laura or Theodore could reply. "You do your part, I'll do mine. Tell you this, though. I was going away for a few weeks. But now I won't go until something's arranged about this Festival. And I can pull a string or two. Don't look it, but I can."

"You didn't last time," said Mrs. Coote, reproachfully.

"This is different. Taken a fancy to these two. Don't know about this Commodore. Might be a charlatan. But perhaps we need a charlatan, an adventurer, a showman. Why not?"

"I must go," said Mrs. Coote.

"They're going, too," said Mr. Jordan. "I want to have a nap. You're all going. Come again—tomorrow—any time—ring me up."

Outside, Mrs. Coote said: "One of you ought to see Councillor Joe Gisburn. And as soon as possible. How do you like Mr. Jordan?"

"I adore him," cried Laura.

"I like him," said Theodore. "But I must confess I'm terribly hungry. The next time I see him I shall go between meals. Just ask for tea," he added, thoughtfully.

"Greedy pig," said Laura.

Mrs. Coote laughed. "Most of them are. And those who aren't—somehow—are even less lovable. Look—there's a bus. We must fly."

It was the Commodore who saw Councillor Joe Gisburn, later that afternoon.

Councillor Gisburn was a fair, stocky chap of about thirty-five, aggressive but essentially amiable, and the owner of an extremely loud, angry voice, like that of an overworked bus conductor. He was eating cold meat pie and washing it down with gulps of strong tea. His little living-room was the noisiest apartment the Commodore had known for years. The radio was on at full strength, although nobody seemed to be listening to it. Two Gisburn children were playing some mysterious shouting game in one corner. In another corner a younger child was hammering away.

Mrs. Gisburn, a plump, smiling woman, kept popping in and out, carrying a healthy-looking baby that must have roared and howled merely to contribute to the family din. None of them seemed to notice the noise, although everybody had to shout to be heard at all. But after twenty minutes of it, bellowing replies to Gisburn's questions, the Commodore felt exhausted.

"What about that sponge, Joe?" Mrs. Gisburn shouted.

"Well, what about it?" he shouted back at her.

"Do you want some or not?"

"Same we had yesterday?"

"Yes—can't make it every day."

"Keep it," he shouted, all in good humour.

"I want some," cried the hammering child.

"Well, you can't have any," shouted Mrs. Gisburn.

The child hammered harder than ever.

What the hell am I doing here? the Commodore asked himself, and longed for a deserted smokeroom, a deep leather chair, a whisky and soda.

"We'll be with you again next week at the same time," roared the radio.

"Okay. We're off," shouted Gisburn. He drained his cup, wiped his mouth, sprang to his feet, whipped out a cigarette and a lighter, lit the cigarette, took three quick, strong puffs at it, handed it to his wife, who took two quick, strong puffs at it and fended off the baby, who was bellowing like a miniature bull, and then smilingly returned the cigarette to her husband. The Commodore felt dizzy. A week of this family and he would have to crawl into a nursing home.

"Pleased to have met you, Commodore," shouted Mrs. Gisburn, who had wide eyes and was as ripe and innocent as a plum.

"Thank you, Mrs. Gisburn," he roared, hardly knowing what he was saying. "And the same to you."

IN the street outside, which was lined with little houses exactly like the Gisburns', it seemed wonderfully quiet and restful. But there was to be no loitering. Joe Gisburn, though loaded down with meat pie, set off at a very sharp pace, his cigarette burning like a quick fuse.

"With any luck," he said, "we'll just catch Alf Muleford in his office. An' if we do, we'll go for him. Only thing to do. Go for him. He'll be against it, like you said, but we go for him."

"Do I go for him or do you go for him?" the Commodore asked.

"We both go for him. Only thing with Alf. I wanted to do it last time, when we had that special committee, but I didn't see who was

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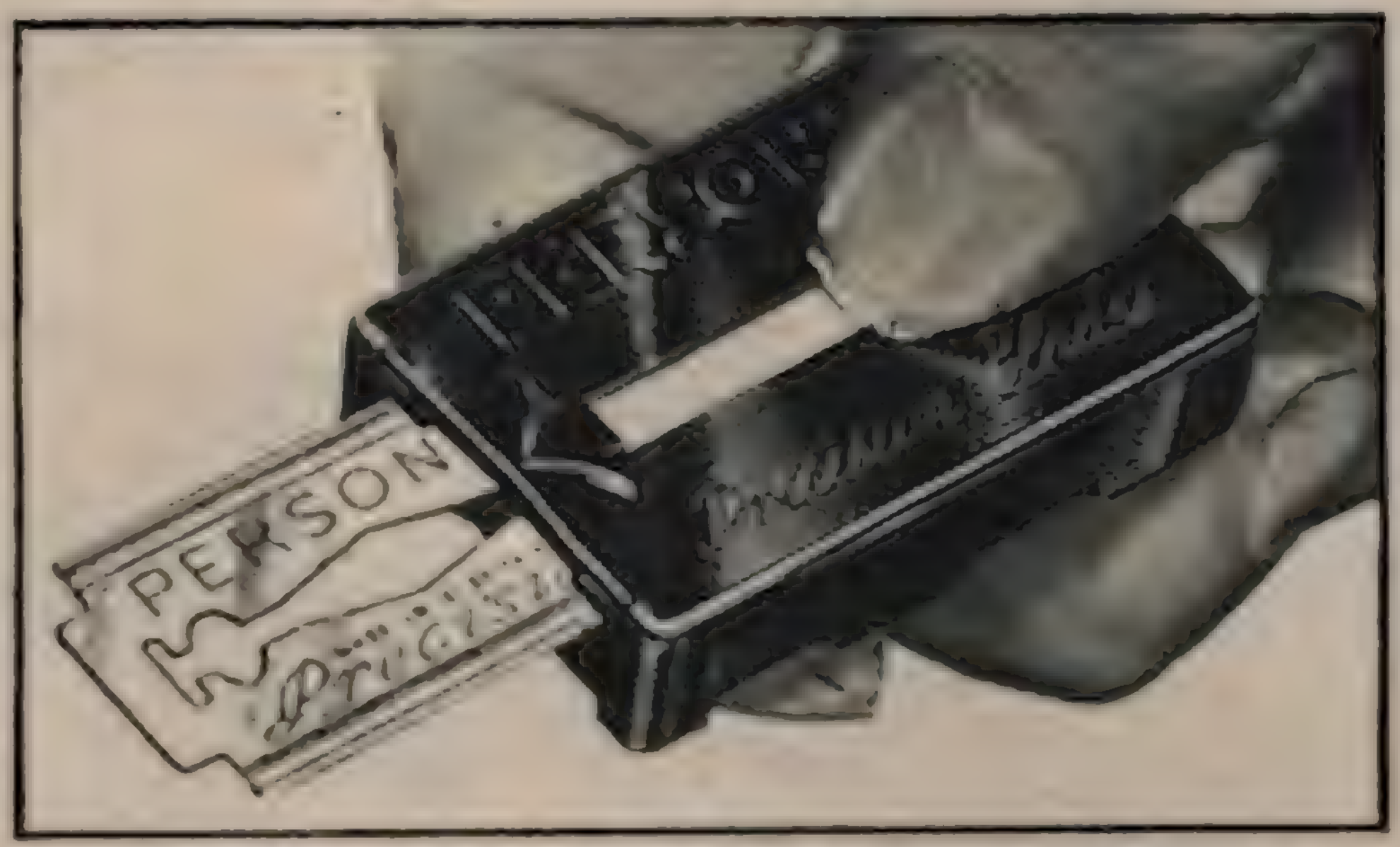

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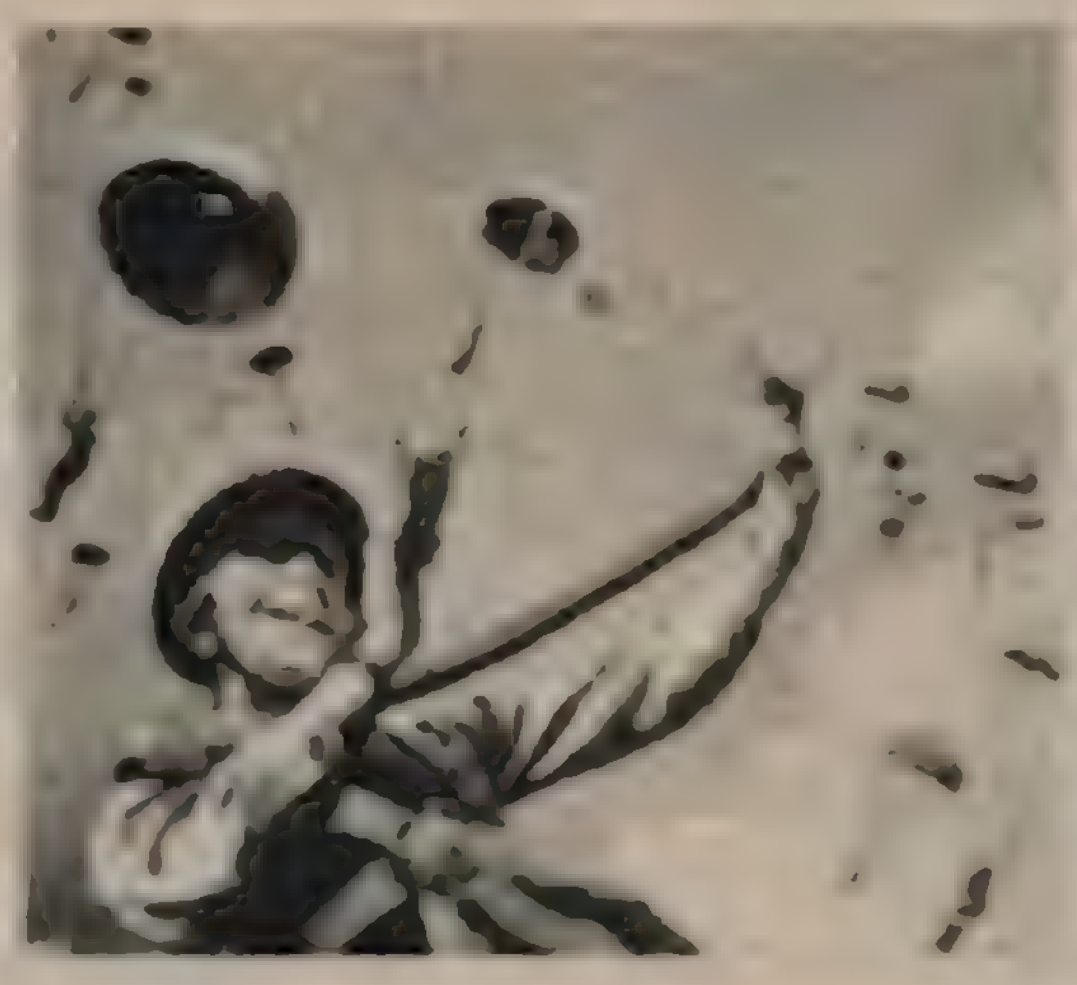
Footslogging? That term's a bit out of date. The infantryman of today has changed with the times. He can drive a fast tracked carrier. He's an expert in the use of the walkie-talkie. He's at home with light and medium machine guns—and portable flame-throwers too. He can shoot fast and shoot straight with every modern infantry weapon, including the anti-tank gun. He's a highly skilled man in a skilled job—where promotion's by merit alone and there's no top limit!



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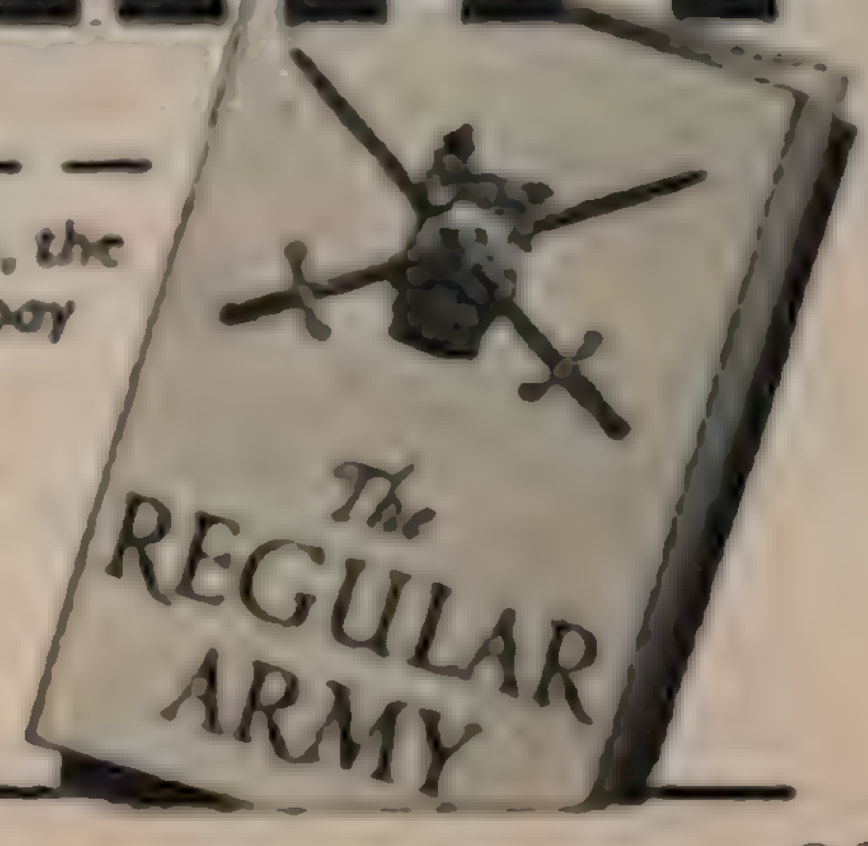

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OH, JOHNNY!

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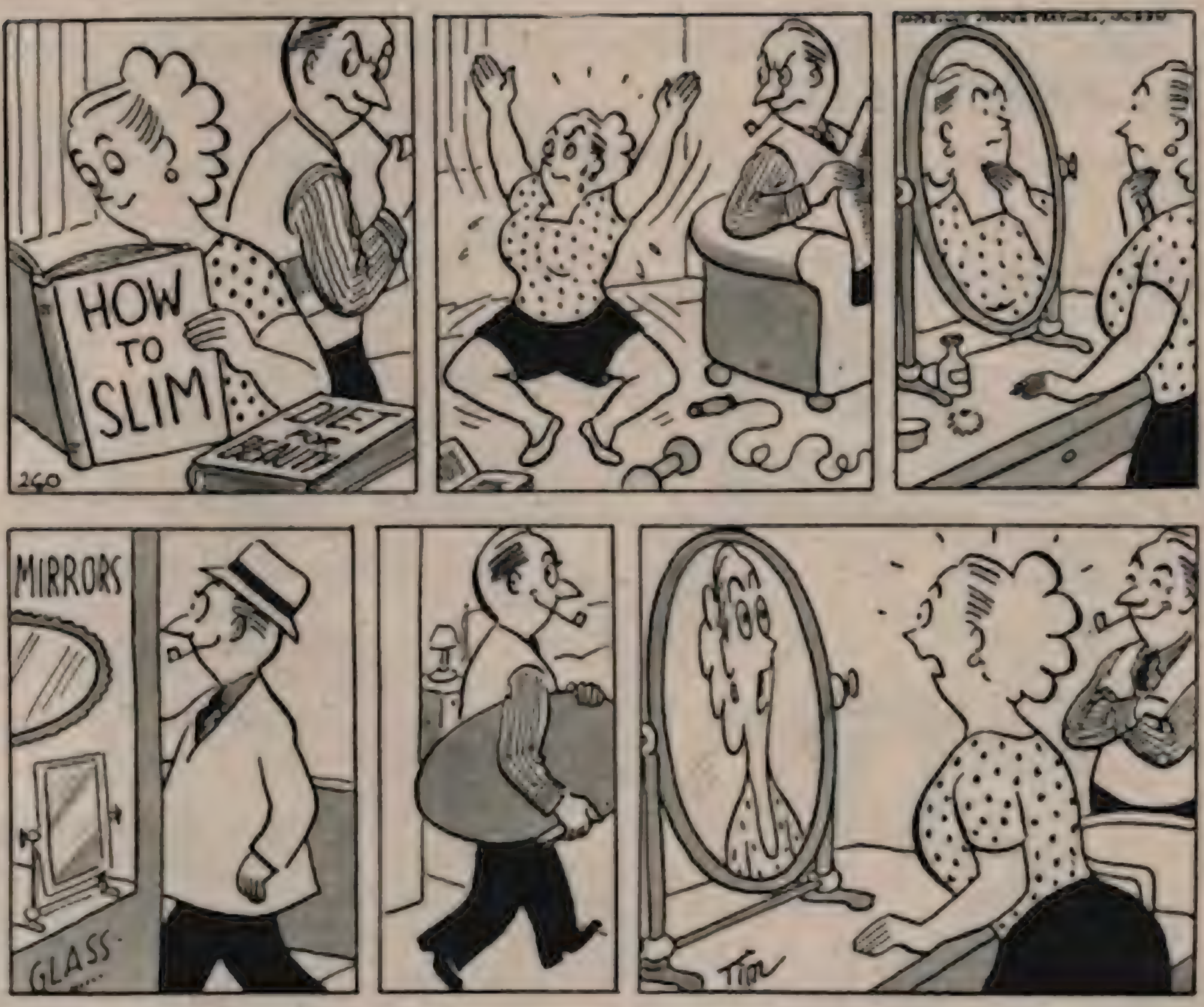

going to do this Festival job even if we pushed it through. Mrs. Coote's too busy. So am I—even if I knew what to do, which I don't. And there's nobody at the Town Hall could take it on. Town Clerk doesn't know whether he's coming or going. And you know what our Mayor's like—poor old Herbert Walmer—just a stuffed shirt with a little sawmill attached—*Pzzzz*. This town wants livening up, and if you or anybody else can help to do it, good luck to you, I say. We'll get the bus here. Alf Muleford's office is just behind the Town Hall."

They were there in ten minutes. Alderman Muleford's office, which was the district headquarters of one of the big trade unions, was on the first floor, above a tobacconist's shop, and was the musty wreck of a Victorian parlour. Alderman Muleford was a bald man in the fifties. He had a long upperlip and a formidably obstinate chin. He was smoking, without any apparent enjoyment, a short pipe. He nodded to Gisburn in a not unfriendly fashion, but turned a slaty little eye on the Commodore.

"Now look, Alf," Joe Gisburn began, "this is Commodore Tribe and he's trying to get this Festival thing going before it's too late, and this time I want you to back me up and not go along with all the old Tories."

"It came up for consideration," said Muleford, very deliberately, "and was turned down." His voice was heavy but curiously flat, and every word arrived with an air of cold finality. He seemed to the Commodore to be perfectly equipped for pronouncing a death sentence.

"Well, we can consider it again and change our minds," said Gisburn.

"Why?" It fell like a lead weight.

"Now turn it up, Alf. If the people here want a festival, like other places are having, then they ought to have one."

"Who says they want one? Nobody's asking me for one." Ten lead weights.

"Oh—for God's sake!" And Gisburn, leaning against some files, fished out a cigarette from a crumpled packet and set fire to it, all with a kind of contemptuous flourish.

"I can assure you, Alderman Muleford," said the Commodore, as smoothly as he could, "there's a considerable demand both here in the town and in the surrounding district that Farbridge should follow the example of other towns——"

"Just a minute," said Muleford. He stared hard at the Commodore before he spoke again. "Joe here's a colleague of mine. Councillor. Labour man. Right. But I don't have to argue the point with you, y'know. And as a matter of fact," he added, portentously, "I think Councillor Gisburn might have done better—much better—to have asked my permission before he brought you along here. Very irregular. *Very* irregular."

"I see," said the Commodore. "Well, that's my fault—not his. In my ignorance, I didn't realize that there might be certain formalities to be observed before I had the privilege of talking to you, Alderman Muleford."

"No need to be sarcastic," said Muleford. "That'll get you nowhere. And another thing. I'm not Herbert Walmer, y'know. Nor the Town Clerk."

"What are you getting at, Alf?" Gisburn asked.

"What I'm getting at, Joe, is this. I don't see where this chap comes in. I'm only saying now what I've already told 'em in the Town Hall. I don't get the idea. I don't see where this chap comes in. I don't see why he's got to come along an' tell us we ought to have a festival or anything else when we've already decided not to have one. We're responsible—and he's not."

"Look—will you just come down off your high horse for a minute, Alf? You're a Labour man——"

Muleford brought his hand down flat on the table. "Yes, I'm a Labour man, an' I was working for the movement before you first went to school, Joe Gisburn. I've fought for a decent living wage and for proper hours and conditions, an' I'll go on fighting for 'em. I stand where I've always stood," he continued, in a louder and more sing-song style that suggested election oratory, "for the welfare of the working class, a better standard of living for the workers, and for the trade union and Labour movements. I still say today what I said thirty years ago——"

"Yes, Alf, we know. This isn't a meeting."

"Very well," said Muleford, as though he had made a generous concession. "But in the present case, what it comes down to is this—I'm not voting public money for fancy work just because some toff comes down from London to talk us into it. No fear. We can do without fancy work."

The Commodore reached for his hat.

"Councillor Gisburn, I think we're wasting our time. Speaking as a toff from London, whatever that might be," he began, softly, "I should just like to say this, Alderman Muleford. I've seen several people already about this Festival business, and so far you're the only person who's received me with deliberate discourtesy. But it's been in private, and I came uninvited to see you in this office of yours, so I'll let it pass. But now I warn you that if you try the same tactics in public, I'll show you up for the conceited woodenhead you are, if it's the last thing I do. Good day, Alderman."

* * *

The Farbridge town hall is not one of those pretentious stone pseudo-Gothic or baroque buildings that many of our cities erected during their Victorian heyday. It was built between the wars, to replace an older structure that was much too small, and it is a square, brick building, four storeys high, that might be a rather dignified factory. In the steely sunset of this March day it looked both grim and wary, and unhappily reminded the Commodore, as he and Gisburn hurried towards the main entrance, of Alderman Muleford. It was as though they were hurrying towards a vast image, flattened and powerfully reinforced, of the alderman.

"Don't think I'm leaving it at that," Gisburn was saying. "I'll tackle Alf Muleford at the next party meeting. Mrs. Coote'll be glad to join in. She and Alf have never got on. And our chaps won't like it when they find him lined up with Tanhead and that Tory lot. Leave it to me. Now you want to see Huntley, Chief Education Officer, don't you? No guts, but means well."

The Chief Education Officer was still hard at work when they arrived. (The Commodore now began to realize that the popular notion of official hours of work was about fifty years out of date.) He was a very refined man, about fifty, melancholy and debilitated, who spoke in a low murmur, and had a trick of closing his eyes after he had ventured any statement, and then taking such a deep breath that not only his nostrils but his whole head quivered. It seemed cruel that such a fastidious being should be imprisoned in the laborious machinery of municipal government; you wanted to give him an aspirin and send him home to read T. S. Eliot. He was certainly not the Commodore's idea of a doughty ally, but nevertheless he was a pleasant change from Alderman Muleford.

"Erce," he murmured, after Joe Gisburn had shouted an introduction and rushed off, "my Chairman—Mrs. Coote—a splendid woman, by the way—had a word with me about it this afternoon, Commodore. It's a capital idea, of course—capital—erce." He closed his eyes, breathed, quivered. "I think you might pull it off—erce. You're not worried about the lack of time?"

"Not if we can get things moving here," said the Commodore. "And they are moving already. Very much between ourselves, I've already had at least one promise to supplement any official grant on a very liberal scale. You'll keep that to yourself, Mr. Huntley, please."

The other produced two of the slowest nods the Commodore had ever seen.

"Strong opposition, of course," he murmured. "Mostly—in confidence, Commodore—from the same people who try to cut us down in education. Finance here is sticky—very sticky—but I'm very fortunate in my Chairman. Mrs. Coote is splendid—really splendid. Erce. With Mrs. Coote, Gisburn, old Jordan, you're not doing badly at all. And I'll do what I can."

Now a round, red-faced little man, almost smoking hot, burst into the room. He was introduced to the Commodore as Dr. Barr, the Medical Officer of Health. Nothing could be further removed from Huntley's manner than Dr. Barr's. He was one of those Scots who seem to exist in a perpetual state of amazement and gleeful wonder. He had a loud, high voice that went up and up in astonishment.

"Ay, ay, Commodore, Ah've been hearing tell of you. An' you're going to try an' gie us a Farbridge Festival after all? Well, well, well! An' you're seeing Huntley here. Ye couldn't find a better man under this roof. An' Ah hear you've got Seth Hull workin' for ye. Ay, the news travels round in a wee place like this. Well, good luck to ye, good luck to ye, Commodore."

"Thank you, Dr. Barr," said the Commodore. "And don't you think, as a medical man, a festival might do these people a bit of good?"

"Ay, Ah do, Ah do, Ah do," cried Dr. Barr. "There's half o' them away to their doctors for want of something to put their minds on. They're bored stiff, man, an' that's a fact. You're plannin' to give us some music, Ah take it?"

"Certainly. As good as we can get, I promise you."

"Do ye hear that, Huntley? Ay ay," and Dr. Barr rubbed his hands together delightedly, "well, Ah'll be there, Commodore, Ah'll be there—and the wife and the two girls alongside me. An' the Corn Exchange is no so bad for sound, Ah'm tellin' ye. Ye could do a lot worse in many a bigger place. Ay, ay, a lot worse. Have ye seen our Member o' Parliament—Major Bulfoss?"

"No, I've been wondering about him."

"Worth trying," Huntley said in

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by George Beardmore

WHY do we say "honeymoon"? The word comes from a Teutonic marriage custom of drinking mead, a liquor of fermented *honey* and water. This was drunk for thirty days after the marriage feast—that is, during a phase of the *moon*.

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a murmur. "Erce, Bulfoss could be useful. Especially at this moment. Dr. Barr will explain."

"Ay, ay, that's true," cried Dr. Barr. "Well, Commodore, come away to ma office. We're away, Huntley, we're away, we're away." Along the corridor, he continued: "Commodore, ye look like a man who could take a dram. Ye are, eh? Ay, ay—well thanks to the wife's brother, Ah'm never without—though it's a malt whisky Ah've got in ma office just now. Could ye take a malt whisky?"

"I can take—and have taken—every kind of whisky that was ever poured in and out of a bottle," said the Commodore.

"Ye have, ye have, eh?" cried Dr. Barr, delighted. "Ay, ay, well, here's ma office." He opened the door and bustled the Commodore in.

Over a dram of the malt, Dr. Barr explained about Major Bulfoss. "He's in trouble just now with Whatmore an' a few o' the stiffer Tories, who'll no want your festival. Ah heard it this day at the club, wi' two or three o' them clittering an' clattering. An' Ah'm thinking—an' it's what Huntley would have told ye only he's over cautious—ye might get Bulfoss to take a different line. Do ye know wee Mobbs, the agent? Ye do? Ay, ay, well Mobbs might be your man to bring the Member in, ye understand, Commodore? Over a drink or two Ah'm thinking ye could persuade wee Mobbs to come in wi' ye, Commodore."

And Dr. Barr winked gigantically, screwing his round, red face into a look of cunning that made him appear like a man suffering agonies of neuralgia.

"I'm very grateful for the tip," said the Commodore. "To say nothing of this excellent whisky."

"Ay, ay, it's a good malt," cried Dr. Barr, beaming. But then he was interrupted.

THE Enemy arrived. The Commodore knew at once that here was the Enemy. The look he gave Dr. Barr, the Commodore, the drams of malt; his cold little eye; his long nose; his tightening lips; his chill and grating tone; the tremendous atmosphere of disapproval, suspicion, resentment, he brought with him—all these belonged to the Enemy.

"Ay, ay," cried Dr. Barr, a shadow across his heartiness, "ye'll not have met Mr. Coverack, our Borough Treasurer. Commodore Tribe. Mr. Coverack'll be the man ye'll be wanting to talk to soon, Commodore—ay."

"About what?" said Coverack.

"Don't tell me ye've not heard of it," Dr. Barr said. "The Farbridge Festival, man."

"I don't know anything about a Farbridge Festival," said Coverack, ignoring the Commodore. "You promised to let me have those figures this afternoon, Dr. Barr."

"Ah did, Ah did. An' if they're not in your office this minute, they're on their way. Ah gave them to Miss Worsley a good two hours since. Though there was a wee bit o' copying for her to do."

"Miss Worsley hasn't been near my department," said Coverack.

"Ay, well—ye know how it is——"

"All I know is," Coverack said, "that I ought to have had those figures last Monday——"

"Ay, ay, but Ah explained at the time——" Dr. Barr was still apologetic and good-humoured.

The other man mistakenly assumed this to be weakness. "I've told you before, Dr. Barr," he began, severely.

But he was not allowed to continue. Dr. Barr put down his glass with a bang. He was puce and bristling. "An' Ah'm telling you, man, ye'll not take that tone wi' me. Ah'm the Medical Officer o' Health for this borough, not one o' your clerks, Coverack. Ye'll oblige me by leaving ma office, into which ye came uninvited."

"I came on official business," said Coverack, white with anger. "And it's not my fault if I interrupt your convivial session with this—er—gentleman." He looked at the Commodore. "Who, by the way, ought to be told by somebody that he's wasting his time—as well as other people's."

"If you don't know anything about a Farbridge Festival," said the Commodore, "then how do you know I'm wasting my time? Illogical, isn't it, Mr. Coverack?"

"It may interest you to know," said Coverack, with a malicious gleam, "that since you came blustering in here the other day, we've put through an inquiry about you to the Festival of Britain authorities who have replied that you have no standing with them, and that, in fact, they know nothing about you."

IT was unexpected and very nasty, but the Commodore gave no outward sign of being disturbed. He merely raised his eyebrows. "If this had been mentioned to me, I could have saved you the trouble. I've never suggested that I was sent here by the Festival of Britain people in London. I merely said I came here after having some talk in London, quite informal talk, with a few men like—er—Bilst. Furthermore, if you propose to take this narrow, official line, then you ought to know that the provincial cities and towns have made their independent arrangements for festivals, appointing local organizers, without reference to the Festival of Britain authorities in London. So these remarks of yours—which incidentally you made quite unnecessarily offensive——"

"Hear, hear!" cried Dr. Barr.

"——are quite beside the point."

"We shall see," said Coverack, unpleasantly, and left.

Dr. Barr now looked serious. "Mind ye, Commodore, yon's an able man an' he's carrying great influence wi' his Chairman, Tanhead, who's another o' the same kidney."

"So I gather. I haven't tried him yet, but I had a go at Alderman Muleford this afternoon, with disastrous results. I ended by calling him a conceited woodenhead."

"Ye didn't!" Dr. Barr was delighted. "Ah've had it on the tip o' ma tongue these last two years. Conceited woodenhead! Ah must remember that. Well, well, you're away to catch wee Mobbs, no doubt." And they shook hands warmly.

To be continued next week

WRITE TO JOHN BULL ABOUT IT

READERS with personal problems can obtain the help of John Bull's team of experts. Inquiries (other than medical) should be addressed to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

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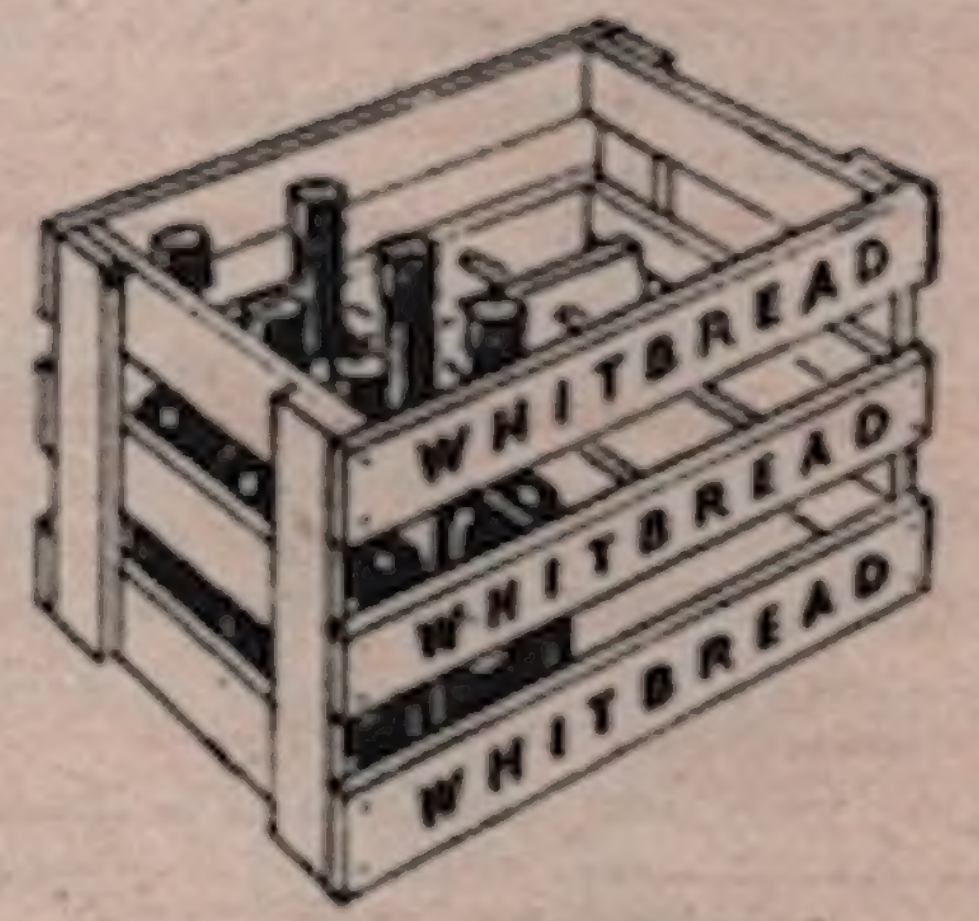
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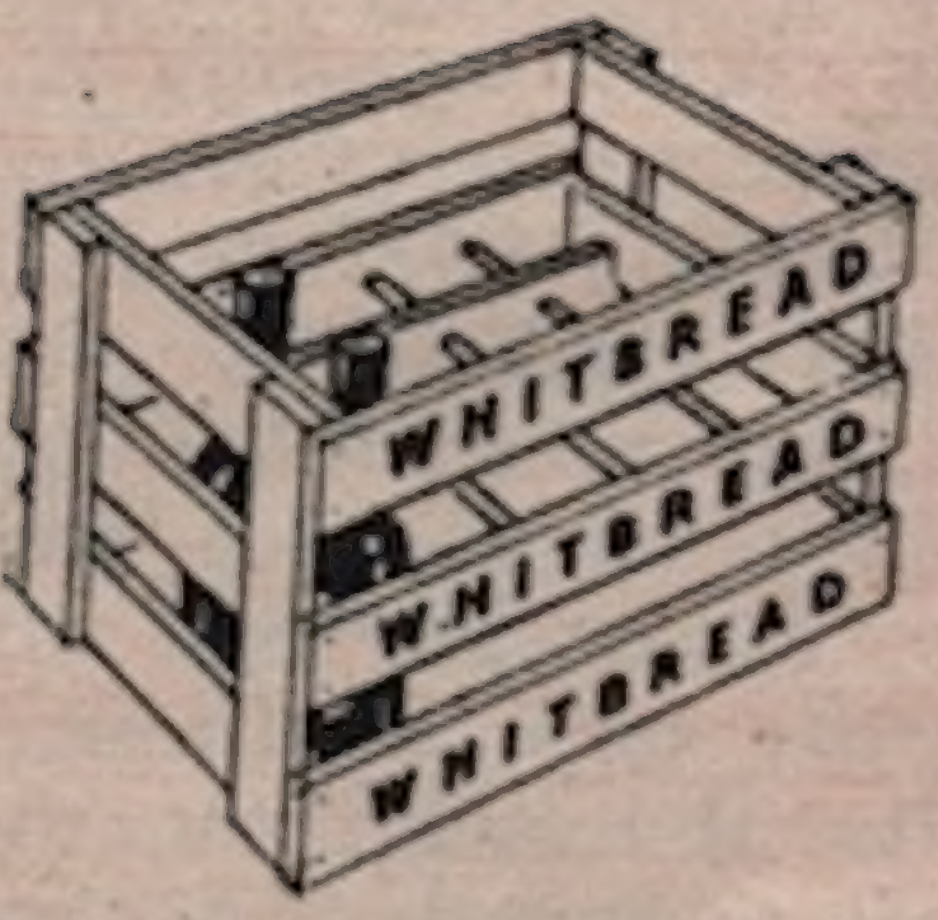
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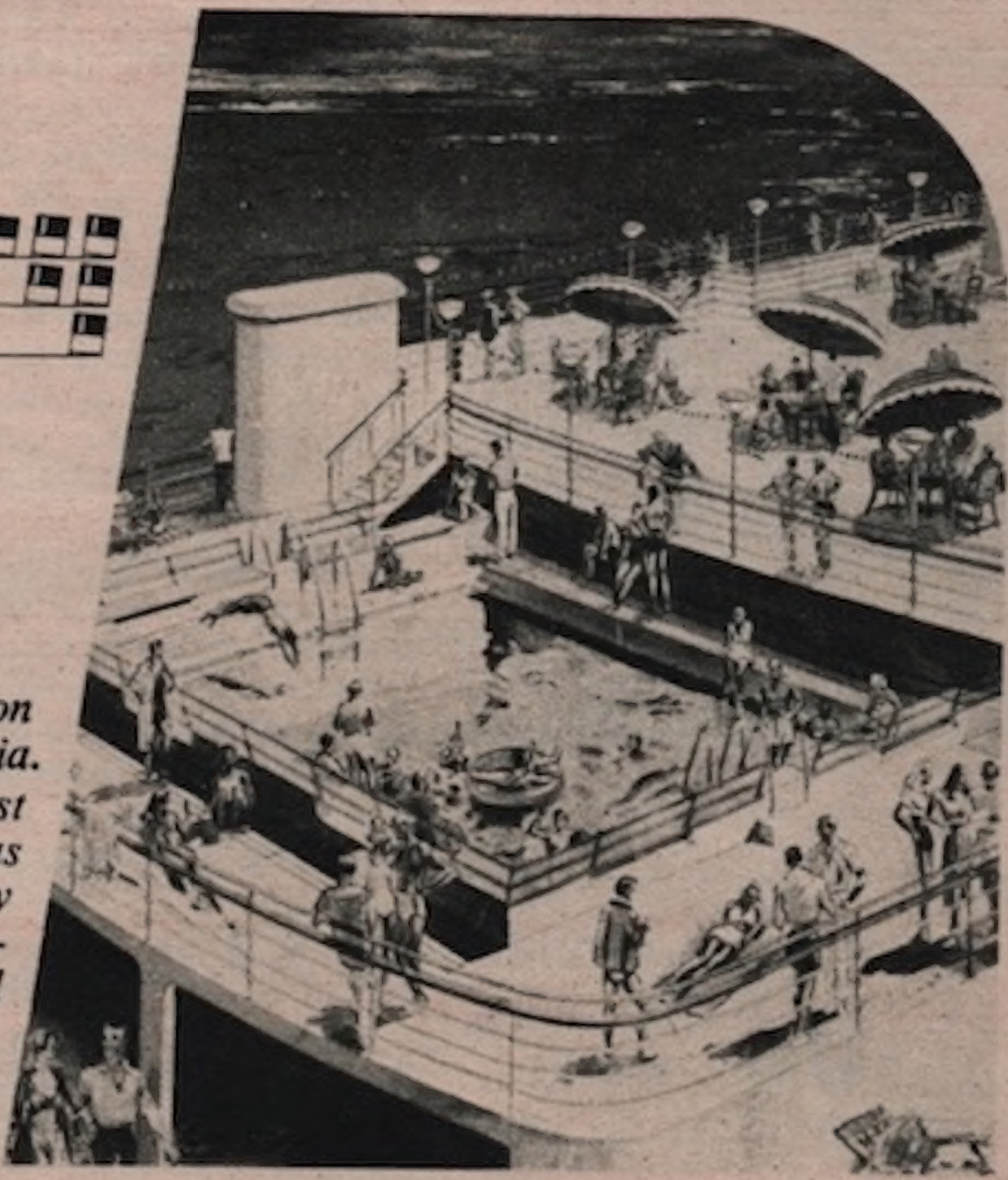

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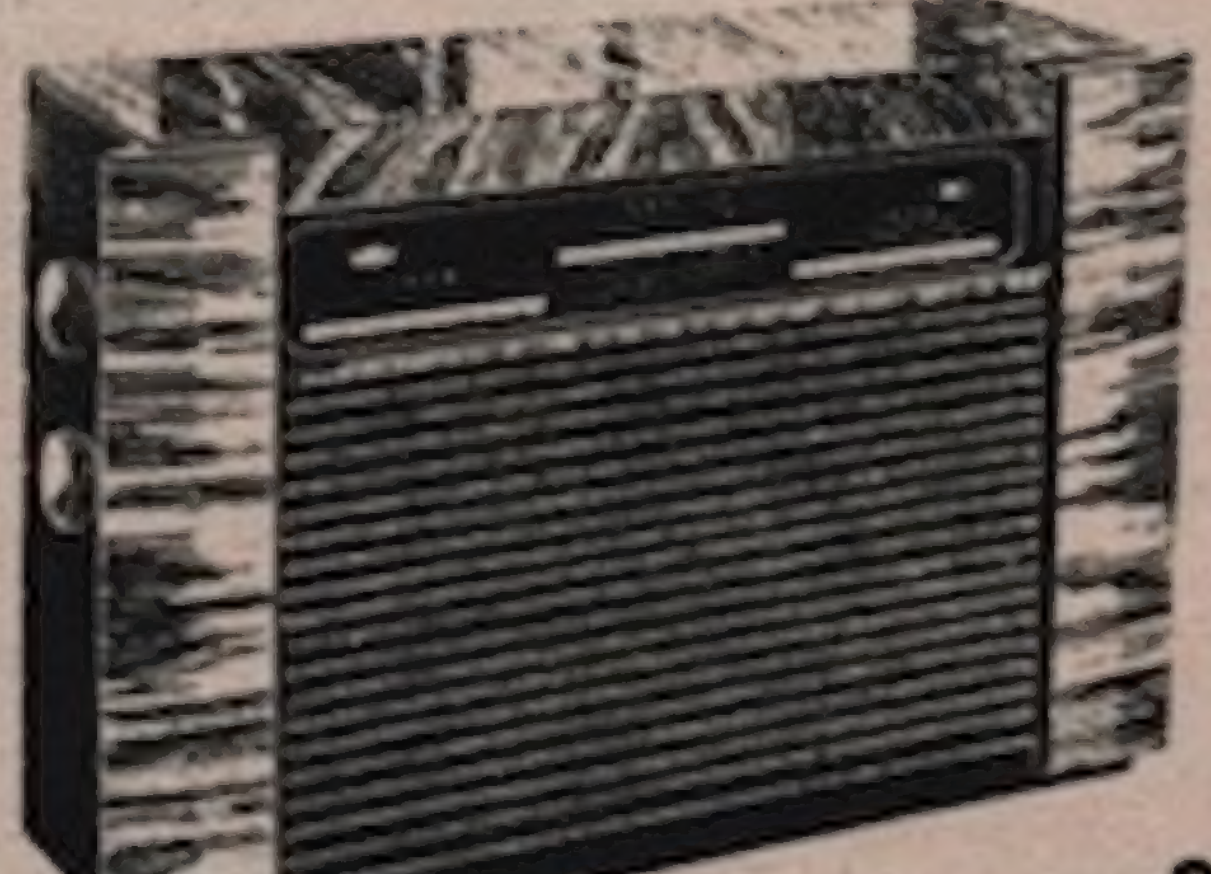

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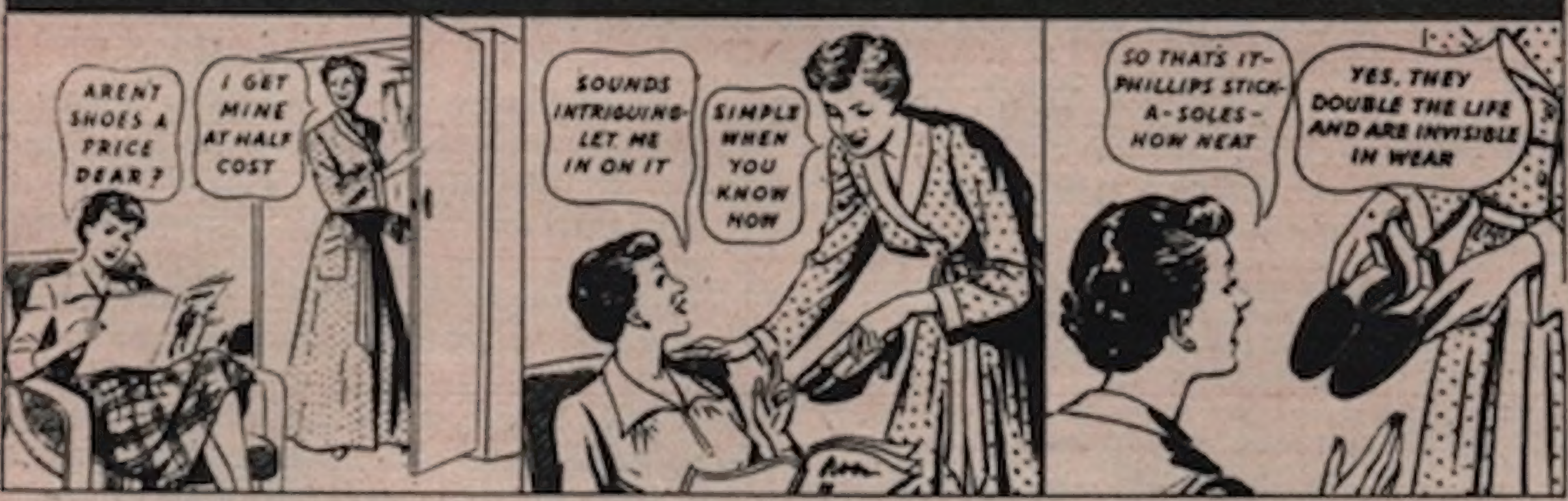
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A fine roasting fowl accompanies each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE OFFER NEXT WEEK!

FLY to the ALPS for your HOLIDAY!

AMONGST snow-capped peaks in glorious summer sunshine here at the great Rhône Glacier are some of JOHN BULL's holiday party of 1950. "The grandest sights one could ever hope to see!" was the salute to the Alps of two guests, Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Wood, 10 High Street, Newport Pagnell.

Both in Switzerland and Devonshire there will again be *Bullets* holiday parties this summer. A few well-chosen words on that coupon of yours below and you, with a companion, can soon be on your way to the Alps or the seaside!

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Garden Of Peace
The Festival Spirit
To Put Things Right
Man Of Few Words
A Hard Life
We Wonder What
Unleashed
Holiday I'd Like
Over The Hills
Tiny Fingers
The Missionary
Red-letter Day
A Little Less
Alfie's Tadpoles
Upset Her
Argue—Argue—Argue
Even A Worm Will Turn, So
Blotted Out
Up In The Attic
With A Sigh Of Relief

Incomplete "Examples" —see Instructions

Morrison's..........................
Saves A Lot Of......................
Just As....................Thought
Dumped In The......................
Once Round The.....................
The.......................And Dad

POST ENTRY

"BULLETS" 1,778 (or Xword 730), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated May 5, and in JOHN BULL, dated May 12, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

"Bullets" Winners 1,773

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Radio: P. Hayden, P.O.Stwd., 22 R.N. Married Qtrs., Milltown, nr. Elgin:

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£25 plus Radio: W. T. Jones, 1 East Burnham Camp, Farnham Royal: A MOUTHFUL — OF COAL-DUST — AND SINGING!

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(Above winners each also receives Radio as offered.)

For ten winners of £2 10s. plus Radio, see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

25 Prizes of £1 and 2,000 new "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

CASH AND FOOD PRIZES FOR XWORDS!

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one, two or three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues **XWORD 730**

3. Such a reply will naturally not satisfy teacher
5. It must make foreman despair to see that new men he's engaged are this when given job
6. Fireman dealing with big blaze becomes
8. Should yours howl you'll probably attend to it quickly
10. Vain customer is apt to be more easy to
13. Man who has seen many cities and countries may perhaps feel sentimental about
14. It's not uncommon for an investment on these to appreciate
15. Is apt to give one a peculiar sensation of unsteadiness and insecurity

Down Clues

1. What cherry sometimes becomes when it's turned
2. Rubbing the wrong way may well produce one
4. Water-logged ground isn't good for many these
7. Producer of drama sometimes doesn't pay sufficient regard to
9. The steps of an old one are often somewhat irregular
11. One kind of stump can be described as this
12. It's rather easy for ribs to get broken in

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EX. ....
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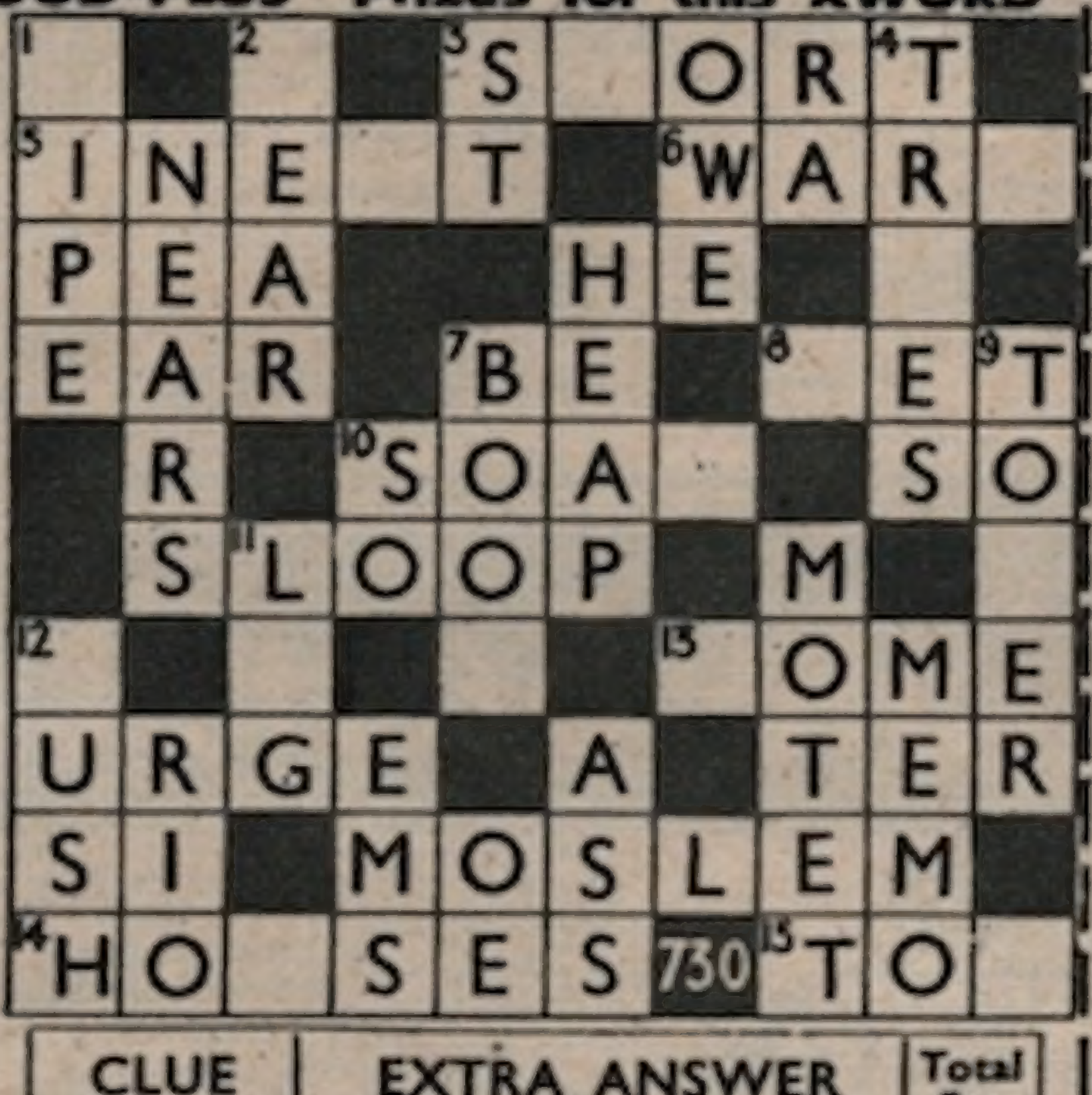
£100 and "FOOD-PLUS" Prizes for this XWORD

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated April 28.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.



CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
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Puzzle and Form strictly copyright **730** Closing Postmark Monday, April 16

I enclose P.O. value...... No..................
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V.I.P. SQUADRON

Continued from page 9

that week. The Germans also sprang one trap for Churchill that unfortunately resulted in the death of seventeen people in a civil airliner, including the film star Leslie Howard.

Howard had been on a propaganda mission in Spain and Portugal at the time the Prime Minister was in North Africa. The actor arranged to fly from Lisbon to London on board a neutral plane that had been functioning on this route without interference. One of his fellow passengers was a wealthy, forty-three year old London income tax expert, Alfred T. Chenhalls. Chenhalls was remarkable for his resemblance to Winston Churchill. He even wore black homburg hats and smoked six-and-a-half-inch double Coronas. He little realized that his appearance would be responsible for an early and tragic death.

German agents in Lisbon spotted the name CHENHALLS on the passenger list and they saw the portly figure, wearing a homburg hat and smoking a long cigar. Ignoring the fact that this man was younger and taller than Churchill, they signalled the Luftwaffe that the British Prime Minister was returning from his North African trip on board a civil airliner. Five Heinkels took off from a Luftwaffe base in France. Three hours after it left Lisbon, the unarmed airliner signalled, "We are being attacked by enemy planes."

Brutal And Stupid

Churchill refers to the events in his memoirs: "The brutality of the Germans was only matched by the stupidity of their agents. It is difficult to understand how anyone could imagine that with all the resources of Great Britain at my disposal, I should have booked a passage in a neutral plane from Lisbon and flown home in broad daylight. We, of course, made a wide loop out by night from Gibraltar into the ocean and arrived home without incident."

As dawn neared on that flight, Churchill, in siren suit and slippers, went forward into the pilot's cabin. It was his habit, he explained later, to sit in the co-pilot's seat before sunrise. At the time, Collins says, "he spoke no word at all but for an hour remained in absolute silence staring with unseeing eyes into the night ahead. Until the sun rose, the only light was the dim glow from the instrument panel. It was almost an eerie sensation."

The *Ascalon* put down at Northolt in the early morning of June 5 after a trip of 4,887 miles. A week later it took off for Africa again—this time with "General Lyon," who turned out to be the King.

NEXT WEEK: Flying the King in wartime. A narrow shave with a buzz bomb

"MRS. SEFTON GRAY"

In our issue dated January 6 last, we published an article, "G.I. Joe Stands By In Britain," by Harry Hopkins, who referred to a cloth shop at Burtonwood, a U.S. Air Force station, and implied that a "Mrs. Sefton Gray" was the person in charge who served American G.I.s across the counter.

The store is a branch of Messrs. Sefton Gray, Ltd., whose headquarters is at 24 Brook Street, Mayfair, London, W.1, who say that the name "Mrs. Sefton Gray" might be misunderstood as a reference to their Mrs. Gray Salisbury. JOHN BULL is pleased to make it clear that Mrs. Gray Salisbury is a director of the company which holds shop concessions at American Air Force stations and does not serve personally in any of the shops.

Do not send cash unless registered. Cross postal orders or cheques. Keep counterfoils of P.O.s.

JOHN BULL'S SHOP WINDOW

EVERY OFFER IS COVERED BY THE JOHN BULL GUARANTEE

BARGAINS BY POST

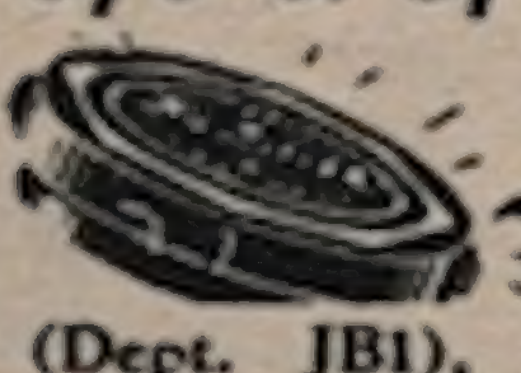
When ordering, write clearly your name and full postal address—in block letters or delay may result.

Silver-plate

YOUR METALWARE WITH "Nu-Silver"

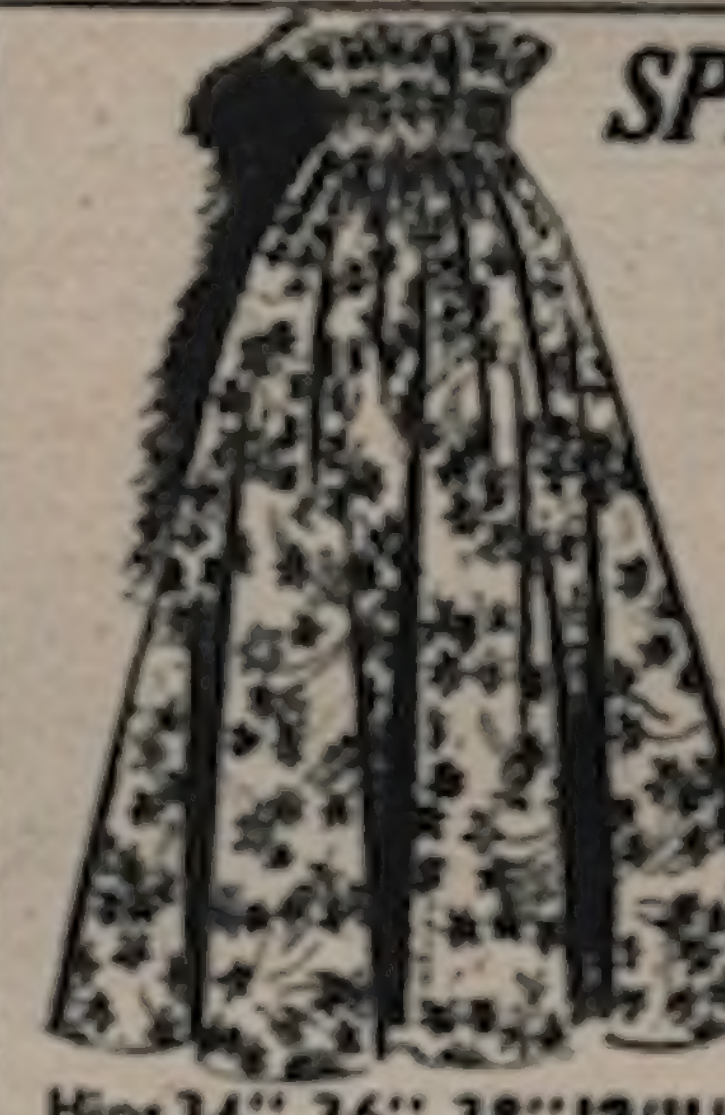
A brisk rub with a damp cloth and you have **PURE SILVER PLATING** for a few pence. Transform your home with NU-SILVER to-day . . . it's wonderful for cars and cycles, too.

3/6 & 5/9 from Stores, Ironmongers, or direct, post free, from



"Nu-Silver" PRODUCTS LTD
(Dept. JB1), 325 City Road, London, E.C.1

SPRING SENSATION



ONLY **12/11**

A glamorous American styled Dirndl skirt direct from the actual manufacturers. Heavy spun rayon of excellent quality—elasticated waist giving full skirt. Attractive floral design in the following colours :-

Hips 34", 36", 38" 12/11
40", 42", 44" 13/11
Post and Packing 1/1

Lt. Blue/Navy, Rose/Black Yellow/Brown, Lt. Blue/Brown Green/Black.

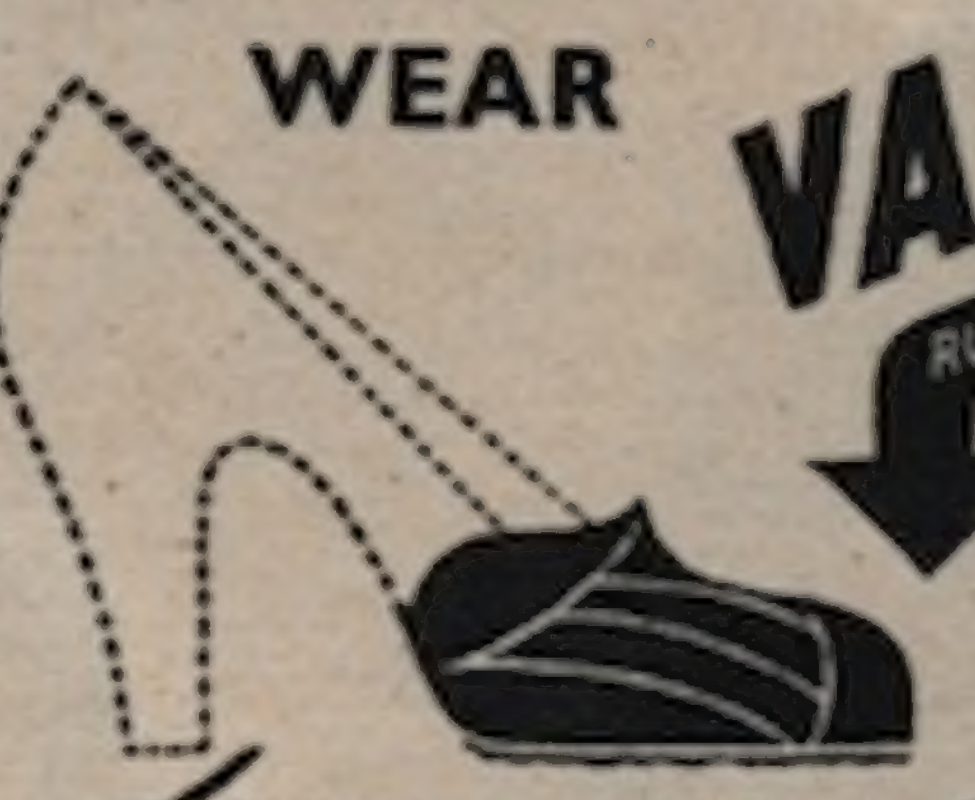
State 2nd and 3rd colour choice.
FULL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE
Personal shoppers invited

WEST END FASHIONS
Dept. 24, 4 DENMARK STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

PROTECT YOUR SHOES IN BAD WEATHER

WEAR **VAMPETS**

RUBBER LATEX FOOTHOLDS



5/6 PER PAIR (postage 3d.)

from over 200 **DOLCIS** STORES

OR BY POST FROM MAIL ORDER DEPARTMENT,
7-13, GREAT DOVER STREET, LONDON, S.E.1

SILVERWARE

RE-PLATED and REPAIRED

Send that old coffee pot, that damaged jug, that shabby tray, teapot, or cutlery and we will make them look as good as new, and you avoid 100% Purchase Tax. Specialist for over 40 years.

J. A. KNIGHT
27 BARTON LODGE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM, 28

COMPARE THESE PRICES

FOR FITTED CARPETS

17"	26"	35"	52"
8/6	13/-	17/-	25/-

PRICE PER YARD. CARRIAGE PAID

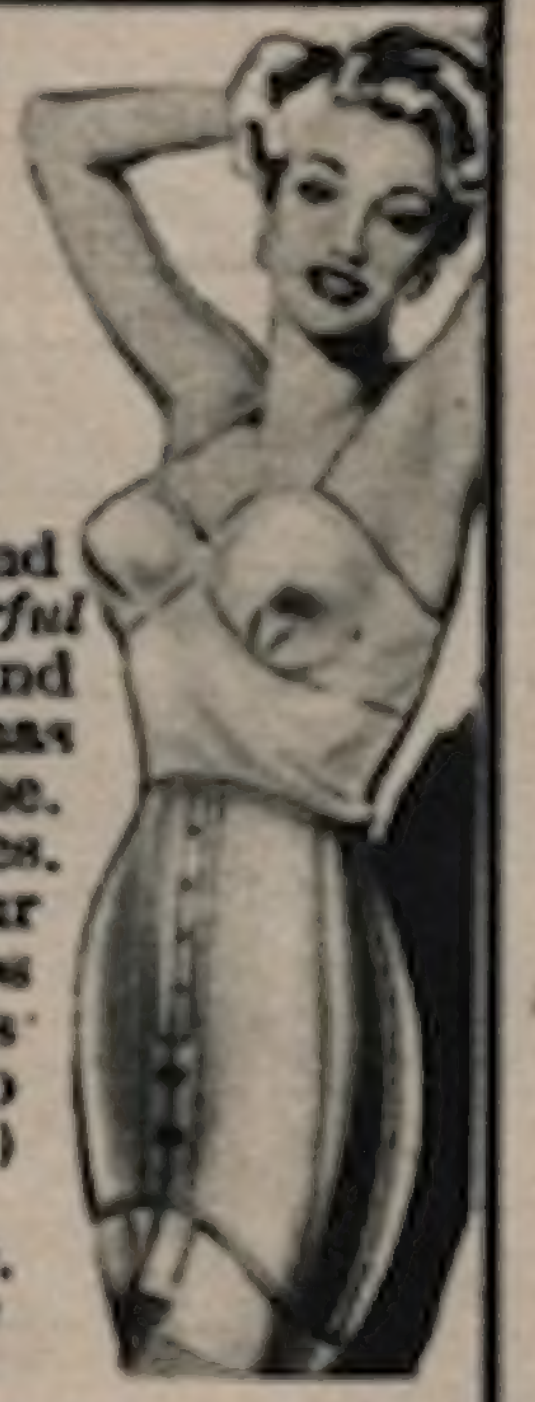
Save fuel, yet still keep your rooms warm by covering the floors with this inexpensive Fyldeshire carpeting. Attractive and soft to tread, this extremely hard wearing, finely felted needleloom carpet will enhance the beauty of your home. The sprayed rubber backing prevents slipping or rucking. It will cut without fraying and requires no underfelt.

Available in an attractive range of colours. Delivery within 10 days of receipt of order.

Send 1/- today for Samples (refunded if Samples are returned)

ASHWORTH & LOWCOCK LTD.
(Dept. F/J.B.) 48 Garstang, Road, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs.

A youthful line



Put on one of these corsets in your own home **ON APPROVAL** and *see for yourself what a wonderful difference it makes.* It's a wrap-round style which avoids lacing and has elastic sides for a lovely smooth line. Save 33⅓ per cent on today's prices. Ask for Model **V690.** Send your name, address, waist and hips measurements with **2/6** P.O. as deposit. The price (waist 24 in. to 32 in.) is **14/7,** (34 in. to 39 in.) **16/10.** Pay balance monthly.

CASH REFUNDED IF NOT DELIGHTED.

Prices include 5 per cent Credit Charge returnable if full cash sent with order.

AMBROSE WILSON LTD
481 Ambron Hse., Vauxhall Bridge Rd., London, S.W.1

ONLY 26/- TO RESTORE A LEATHER 3-PIECE SUITE

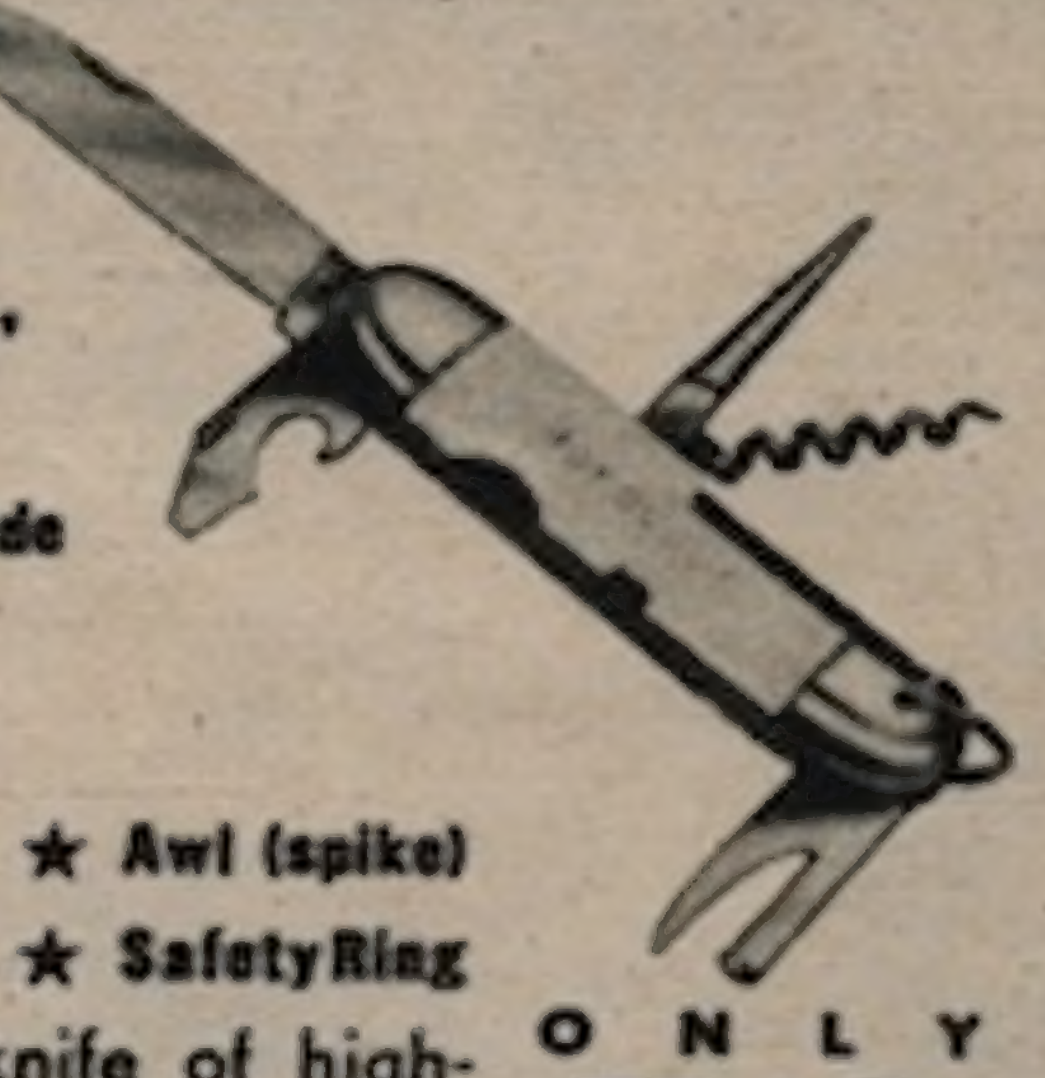
Nuagane gives new life and new colour to real and imitation leathers. Choice of 22 colours. Also in smaller tins.

Write now for colour card

NUAGANE LEATHER LACQUER

NUAGANE PRODUCTS LTD.
19D SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

A "6-in-1" KNIFE



The "BOY SCOUT" with

- ★ **Large sharp blade**
- ★ **Tin opener**
- ★ **Bottle opener**
- ★ **Screwdriver**
- ★ **Awl (spike)**
- ★ **Corkscrew**
- ★ **Safety Ring**

A really useful knife of high-grade steel with dozens of uses. Handsome "Pearline" handle. A grand gift for any boy—or man.

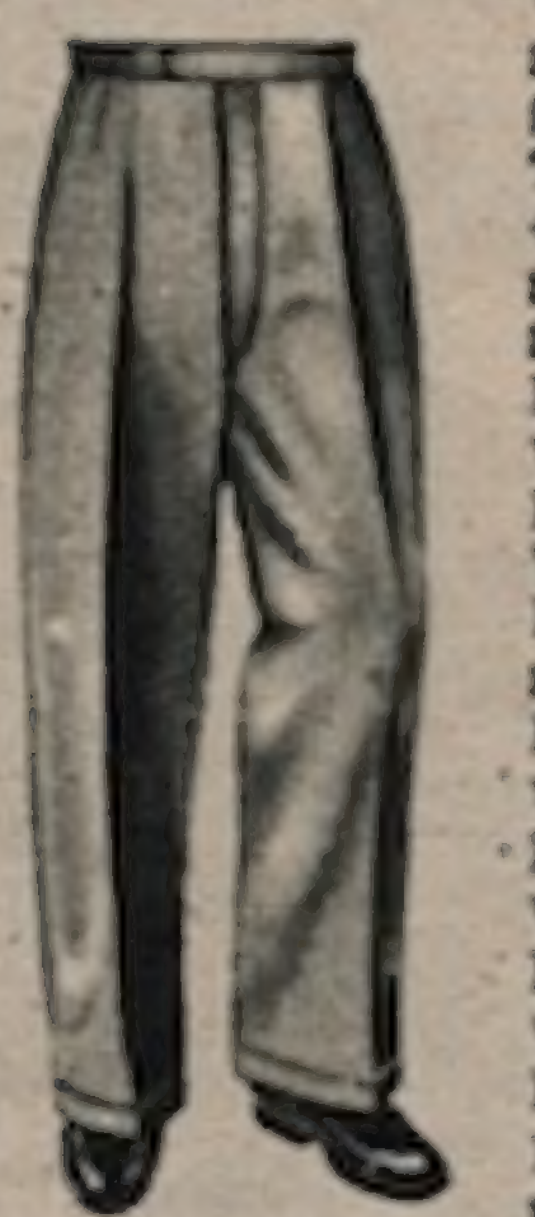
ONLY **7/6** Plus 6d. postage

Cash with order. *No C.O.D. orders please.*

M·O·S MAIL ORDER SUPPLY CO. (Dept. JB)
33 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1

SENSATIONAL OFFER

OUTSIZE SPORTS COATS



S.B. lapels, 3 pkts. Available in Fine wearing Dark Grey, Brown, Fawn or Blue Grey Tweed. Chest sizes: 42, 44, 46, 48, 50. PRICE **72/9**

Superior quality flannels in Grey Chalk Stripes. Full cut, 3 pkts. P.T.U. Extn. Belt.

Wsts.: 42, 44, 46, 48. Legs: 29, 31, 33.
Wsts.: 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40. Legs: 34, 35, 36. OUR PRICE **52/9**

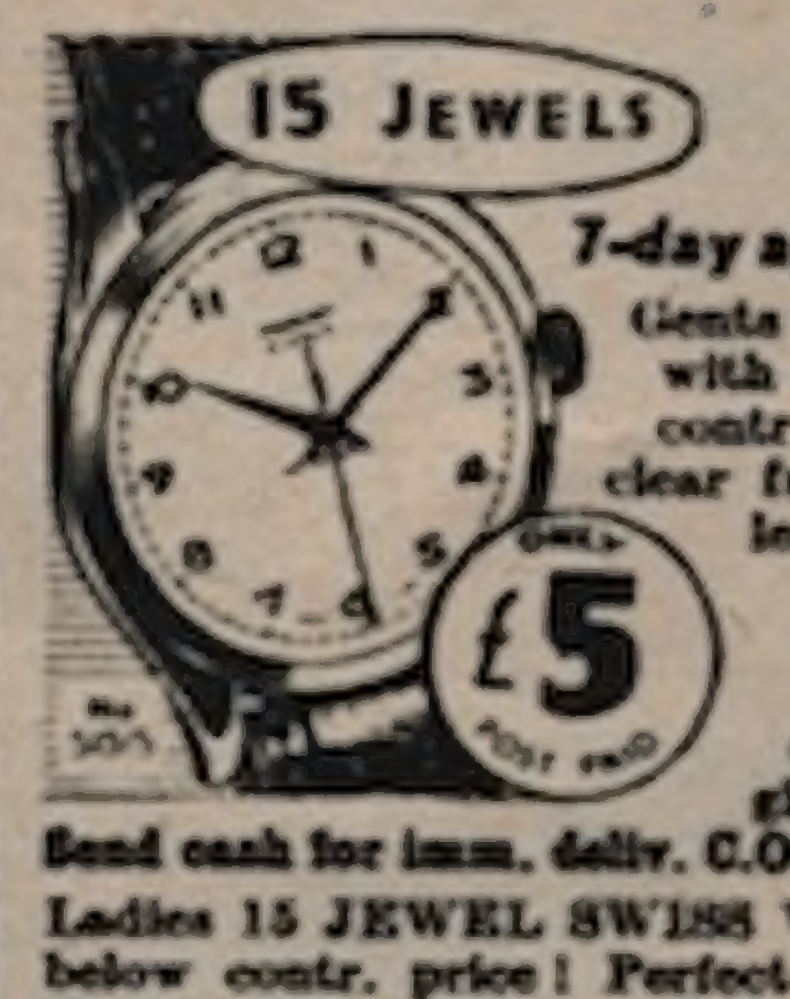
Special offer of Men's Outsize Mod. Grey Flannels. Full cut, 3 pkts. P.T.U.

Wsts.: 42, 44, 46, 48. Legs: 29, 31, 33. **34/6**
Wsts.: 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40. Legs: 27, 28, 29, 31, 33. **27/9**
Wsts.: 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40. Legs: 34, 35, 36. **30/-**

1/- post on all above items. C.O.D. if preferred. Personal shoppers invited.

L.P. DIRECT SALES (Dept. J.B.36)
66 LOWER CLAPTON ROAD, LONDON, E.5

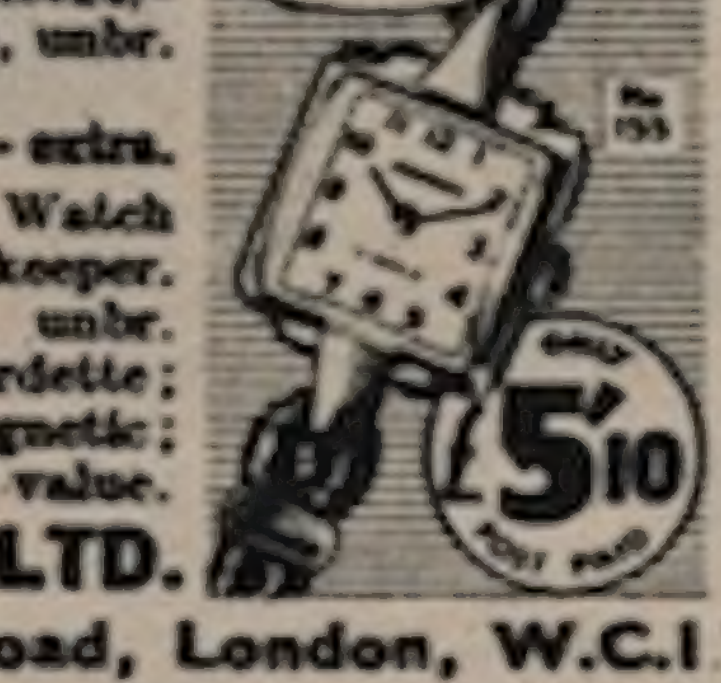
★ MORGAN'S ★ AMAZING - 15 JEWEL BARGAINS!



written 5-year guarantee.
7-day approval or money refunded

Gents 15 JEWEL SWISS Wrist Watch with large sweep second hand, below contr. price! Perfect timekeeper, clear full figures, non-magnetic, stainless chrome/steel case, leather strap (stainless steel bracelet 10/- extra), unbr. glass.

Send cash for imm. deliv. C.O.D. 1/- extra.



Ladies 15 JEWEL SWISS Wrist Watch below contr. price! Perfect timekeeper. Fashionable chrome/steel case, unbr. cocktail glass; modern nylon cordette; beautiful raised figures, non-magnetic; small and lovely. Country's best value.

W. D. MORGAN & CO., LTD.
Dept. J.B.3, Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1

Wools

WE CAN STILL OFFER YOU

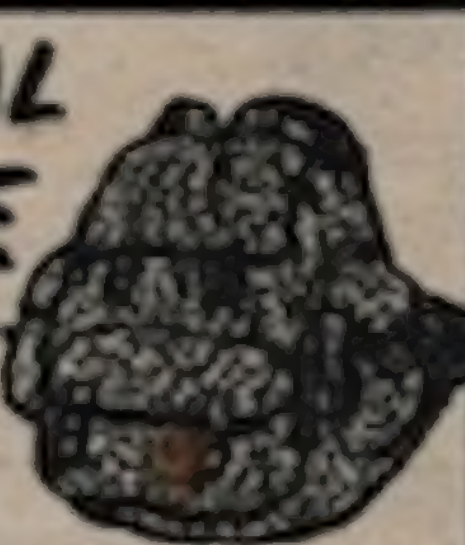
A FULL RANGE OF WOOLS
in the LATEST SHADES
AT THE OLD PRICES

Write for free Samples of Knitting Wools, Rug Wool, Rug Canvas, Airlyne Rugmaker, Airlyne Candlewick Machine

SPECIAL OFFER Fully Fashioned ART SILK HOSE **6/11 PR.**

ASKEWS (Dept. 12)
59 PARKSIDE ROAD, BRADFORD, YORKS.

BRAND NEW TROPICAL BERGEN TYPE TUBULAR FRAME RUCKSACKS



Made of superfine quality waterproof cloth. Complete with metal frame and all fittings. Plus 2/- post and packing Price each **45/-**

Waterproof OFFICERS TRAVEL GRIPS

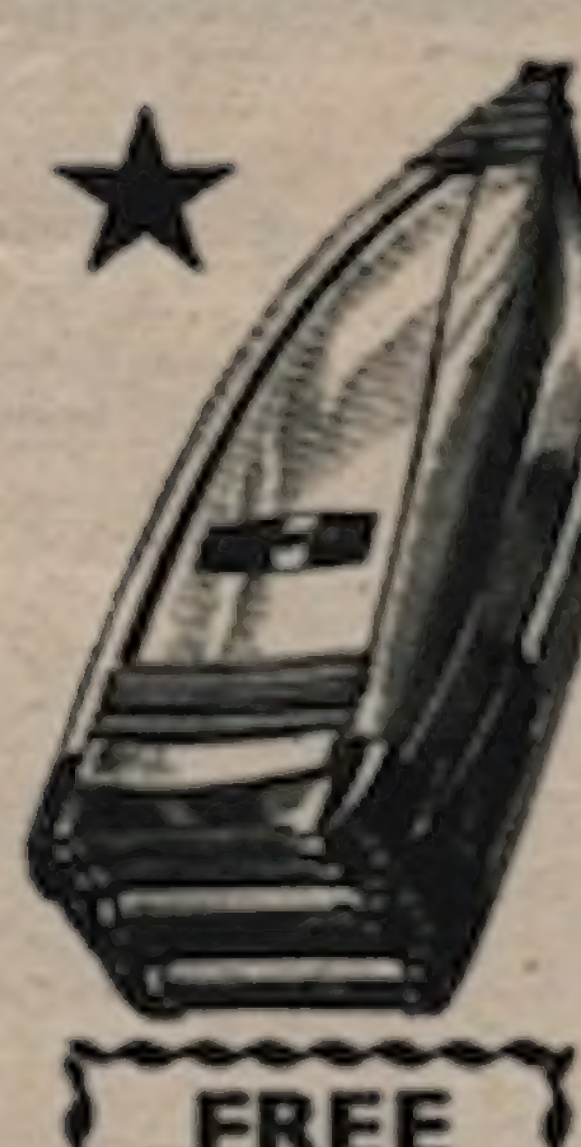
23"x16"x10" gusset. Extra large. 28" zip. Superior Fawn Grained Leather Cloth, seams reinforced. Rustproof studs at base. Self-locking padlock. Post paid **45/-**

ROBERT GARSTON LTD. (Dept. JB106)
215 VAUXHALL BRIDGE RD., LONDON, S.W.1

THE BEST SHAVE OF ALL

is with the

REMINGTON RAND ELECTRIC SHAVER



which really does give a better, quicker and more pleasant shave than the blade and soap method.

We are so convinced you will agree that we shall be pleased to send either model on **TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL** on receipt of deposit.

The **'Foursome'** (for average beards). Cash price **£7/16/5,** or **30/-** with order and **7** monthly instalments of **20/-.**

The **'Five'** (for stubborn beards). Cash price **£8/17/7,** or **50/-** with order and **7** monthly instalments of **20/-.** Dispatched in silk-lined case per registered post.

Brochure FREE by return from the Electric Shaver Specialists:

FREE TRIAL

★ **The L.R. SUPPLY Co. Ltd.**
Balcombe, Sussex. *(Est. 1925)*

OFF WHITE LINEN PALLIASSE CASES
6ft. x 2ft. 3in. approx., round end. Perfect condition. 2 for **17/-**

OFF WHITE LINEN MATTRESS CASES
Perfect condition 6ft. x 2ft. each **13/6** 2 for **26/-**

NEW IRISH LINEN LENGTHS
(a) Natural Shade 6yd. x 32in. each **27/-** (b) Embroidery, Cream 3yd. x 52in. each. **28/6**

PARACHUTES
(1) PURE WHITE SILK 16 panels: each 36in. x 84in.
4 Panels **15/-** 8 Panels **27/6** Whole Par. **52/6**
(2) HUGE WHITE RAYON PANELS. each 45in. x 9yd.
2 Panels **17/6** 4 Panels **32/6** 8 Panels **60/-**
(3) NYLON, Peach, Pink or Light Blue, each panel 36in. x 150in.
2 Panels **20/-** 4 Panels **37/6** 8 Panels **72/6**
(4) CREAM CAMBRIC. 12 panels, each panel 20in. x 60in. Whole Par. **12/-**

MEN'S NEW GREY CHALK STRIPE FLANNEL TROUSERS
32–46in. W., 29–33in. I.L. Superb Value. Per pair **30/-**

Carriage free. *Satisfaction or Money Back.*

H. CONWAY LIMITED (DEPT. 10),
139/143 Stoke Newington High Street, London, N.16

BIG BARGAINS!

In surplus releases ex R.A.F., ARMY and ADMIRALTY Stores. Rapidly diminishing stocks. Unrepeatable offers.

WOOL BLANKETS

At even less than pre-rise price. Ex-Naval & Military wool blankets. Superior quality soft, winter weight. All guaranteed hygienically pure & sound.—60 in. by 80 in. Available in colours: Green, Rust, Navy-Blue, Wine Grey & Sky-Blue. Carr. Paid. Priced each **40/-** Order limit 4 blankets.

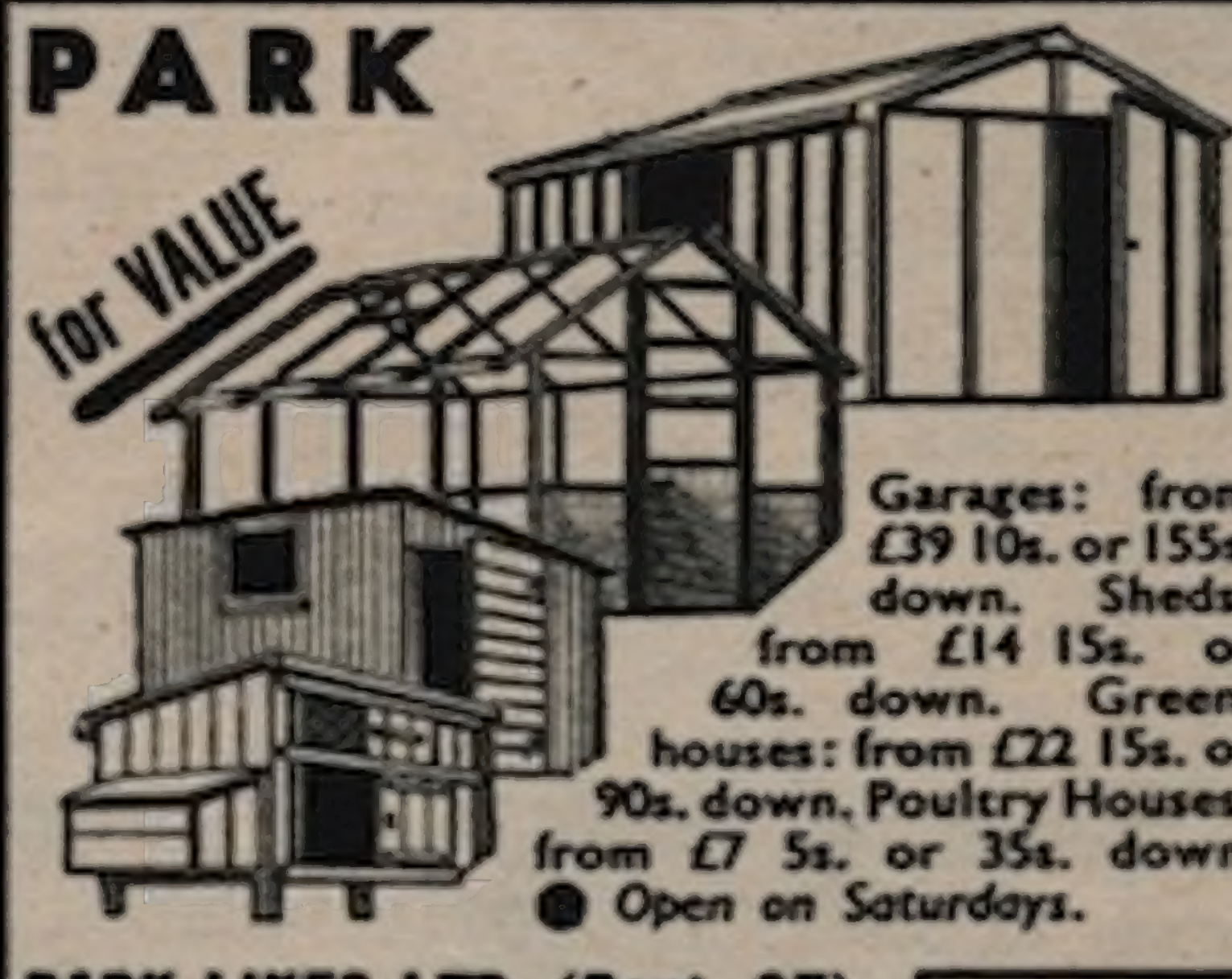
PARACHUTE MATERIAL

Large sections of Brand New heavy sheer Silk in beautiful pastel shades—Ivory-White, Turquoise, Peach, Shell-Pink, Lemon, Lime-Green and Powder-Blue. Each section measures 4 in. across narrow end, broadening continuously for 4 yards to 36 in. across base, comprising 3 sq. yds. exquisite material. Surplus release price per section. **10/-** POST FREE

Remittance with order. Money refund guarantee.

GOVERNMENT SURPLUS SUPPLIES
(Dept. J.B.) Tower Court, London, W.C.2.

PARK



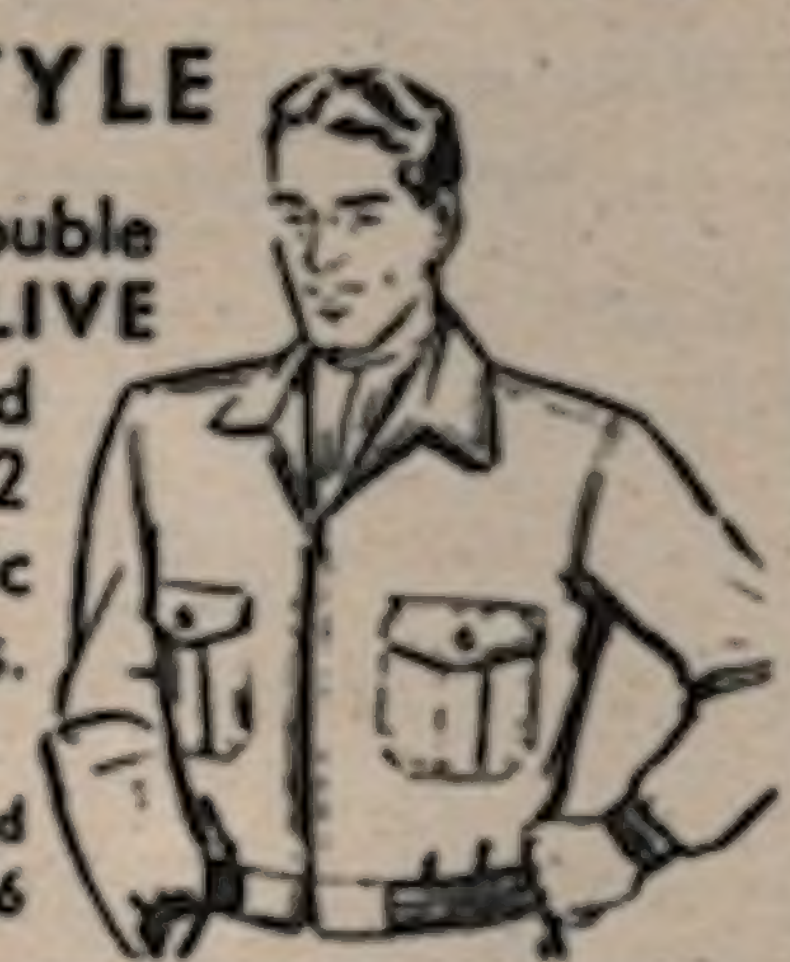
Garages: from £39 10s. or 155s. down. Sheds: from £14 15s. or 60s. down. Greenhouses: from £22 15s. or 90s. down. Poultry Houses: from £7 5s. or 35s. down.
● *Open on Saturdays.*

PARK LINES LTD. (Dept. 27)
717-719 SEVEN SISTERS ROAD,
LONDON N.15
Telephone: *Stamford Hill* 9211-2-3

Send for Free Catalogue giving full details.

WIND-CHEATERS

AMERICAN STYLE



BRAND NEW. In double texture material. **OLIVE GREEN.** Guaranteed waterproof. Zip front, 2 breast pockets. elastic waist-bands and cuffs. Sizes 32" to 40".

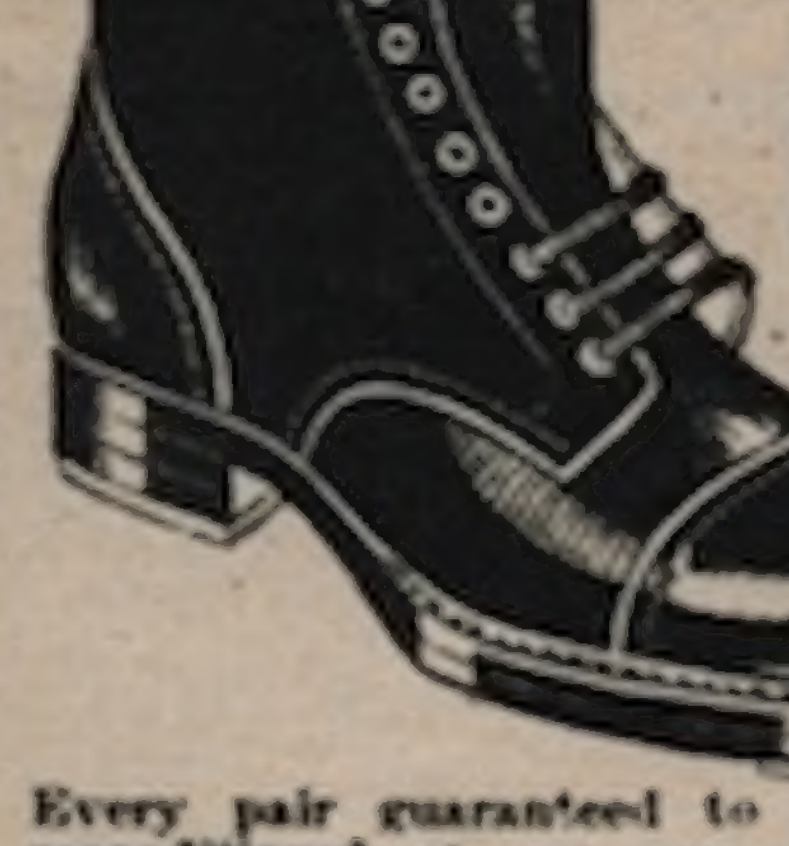
29/6 plus post and packing 1/6

Size 42" 2/- extra ALSO ALL WOMEN'S SIZES

Cash refunded if not satisfied

CLAPTON SURPLUS STORES LTD.
(DEPT. J.B.)
218 LOWER CLAPTON ROAD, LONDON, E.5

GENUINE EX-BRITISH ARMY BOOTS



Of Superior Quality

Every pair guaranteed to be perfectly and scientifically **reconditioned** at our own Factory. Specially-treated and re-blocked to give the appearance and hard wear equal to any new boot. Exported by us to all parts of the world. **Ideal for HEAVY WORKERS, the GARDEN and all OUTDOOR WORK.**

State size. Per pair, plus 1/6 post and packing **15/-**

Money refunded if not satisfied.

GORMAN & SONS (Footwear) LTD.
(Dept. JB), 251 Lower Clapton Rd., London, E.5

NEW FEET

INSTANT RELIEF from pain under arches and at ball of foot. Hard skin disappears; no more tiredness! Omniped Elastic Foot Cushions are soft and comfortable, yet the most effective arch supports. More than 1,000,000 already relieved. State shoe size. Postage and packing 5d. Full satisfaction guaranteed.

6/11 PER PAIR

INTERNATIONAL FOOT APPLIANCES LTD.
(Dept. JB.29), 92 Baker Street, London, W.1

SMOKE 6 TIMES AS MUCH—*without extra cost*

WHY pay 3/9 to 5/- an ounce for your pipe or cigarette mixture?

YOU can now cut your smoking bill to a mere SIXTH (or less) without forgoing a single soothing puff.

HERE is a really good, satisfying herbal substitute, skilfully blended and flavoured to please the Virginian or Turkish palate.

SIX SMOKES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!—It's worth trying, isn't it?

H.S. SMOKING MIXTURE
for pipe or cigarette
PER **7½D.** OZ.
VIRGINIAN OR TURKISH FLAVOUR
MINIMUM trial packet 4 oz. for 2/6 POST FREE or 1 lb. for 9/-.

HERBAL SERVICE (Dept. J.B.), Tatsfield, Kent

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4 Tuck. Tin.

Delectable is the word for it—and Batchelors Cream of Tomato soup delights the eye, too

Batchelors

WONDERFUL Foods

'B' for BATCHELORS

ENGLISH CANNED SOUP . . . VEGETABLES . . . FRUITS

"Smashing...but he's mine!"

"TED WAS 'SMASHING' in our sweetheart days—later I discovered he was smashing in another sense. No wonder! As a bride, I learnt to cook—practising on him! After one of my amateur meals, when we'd wash up, he'd often show temper—once banging plates down so hard they broke!

"But with a shelf of Batchelors wonderful foods, my meals began to win honours. Delicious Batchelors soup, tender Batchelors peas with the meat, and luscious Batchelors fruits—such a meal is always a success! Ted's plate-smashing days are over—he's a good-tempered darling again!" . . . Solve *your* meal-time problems with Batchelors wonderful canned foods—always of the same fine quality and thriftily priced. Order delicious Batchelors *today*.

PIRATE PIE

Turn a little left-over meat into an appetising dish—make a pie filling it with the chopped meat and Batchelors peas mixed with gravy. Batchelors fine peas are rich in protein, important for good health.

JB

BP 29/80